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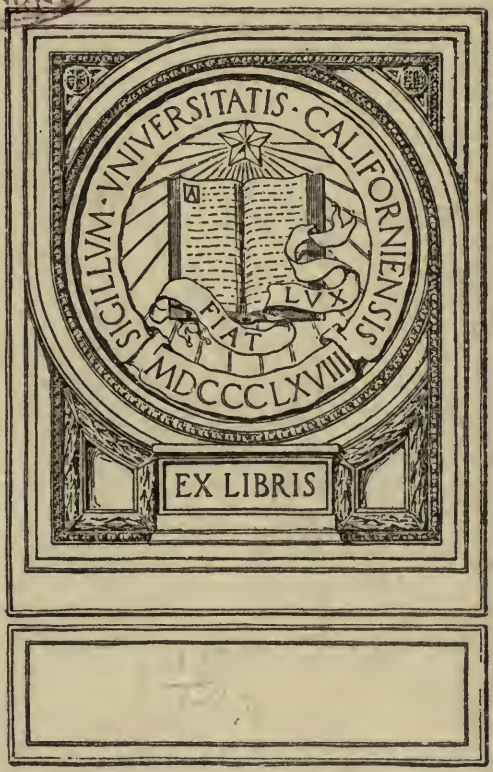

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AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN A TURKISH HAREM

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

(*In collaboration with* MELEK HANOUM)

"ABDUL HAMID'S DAUGHTER"

(*In collaboration with* ZEYNEB HANOUM)

"A TURKISH WOMAN'S EUROPEAN IMPRESSIONS"

THE AUTHOR IN TURKISH COSTUME

AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN A TURKISH HAREM

BY

GRACE ELLISON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

EDWARD G. BROWNE, M.A., F.B.A., F.R.C.P.

WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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I DEDICATE
THESE LETTERS TO ALL THOSE
WHO MADE MY VISIT
SO INTERESTING AND HAPPY,
BUT PARTICULARLY TO MY FRIEND
AND HOSTESS.

325343

PREFACE

THESE letters do not claim to be a psychological study of Turkish character, nor are they a political or historical treatise. They are only an Englishwoman's impressions of Turkish harem life, written during a very happy and interesting visit amongst Turkish friends. Should I not have said in these letters what my Turkish sisters expected me to say; should I not have understood their civilization as they hoped I would understand it; I feel sure they will forgive one who they know has always been, and will always be their sincere friend. To correct the errors, prejudice, and hatred which have become almost part of the British national "attitude" towards Turkey is not an easy task. If these letters have been able in ever so small a way to spread some of the enthusiasm and love I feel for a nation which Europe has so severely censured, they will at least have justified the reason of their existence.

My thanks are due to the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* for allowing me to reproduce those letters which have appeared in the columns of that paper.

GRACE ELLISON

ROUEN, 1915

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INTRODUCTION

AS one who for nearly forty years has been a friend and admirer of the Turks and a student of their language and literature, it is a satisfaction to me, especially in the dark days through which Turkey has passed and is passing, to find a fresh opportunity of testifying to my belief in the virtues of that much-maligned and ill-used race. I have, therefore, willingly acceded to the request of the authoress of this work that I should add to it, now that it is finished, a few words of introduction, though such introduction, as it seems to me, is hardly needed. Miss Ellison enjoyed an opportunity of seeing an aspect of Turkish life which few English women and no English men have been privileged to study at first hand, and, as her book abundantly shows, she has made good use of her opportunity. It will not be her fault if she fails to "correct the errors, prejudice and hatred which have become almost part of the British national attitude towards Turkey," and "to spread some of the enthusiasm and love" she feels "for a nation which Europe has so severely censured."

Before the Revolution of 1908 Turkish family life and the qualities of the Turkish woman were, in all save the rarest cases, sealed books even to those Europeans who mixed freely with Turks and spoke Turkish with fluency; and though since that period a few Turkish ladies, notably the talented authoress, Hálida Hanoum (to whom Miss Ellison repeatedly refers in the course of these pages),[1] have visited England, and even pursued their studies with remarkable success in English women's colleges, they are still sufficiently unknown and surrounded with mystery to give to this present book a real interest and value. On one occasion, some four years ago, when I was at Constantinople, I was invited to meet a group of Turkish ladies who were anxious to make the acquaintance of an Englishman who had studied their language and literature, edited the most comprehensive and sympathetic history of their poetry,[2] and was known to them as a sincere friend of their country and their religion. I was much struck by their eagerness and intelli-

[1] Pp. 17, 66, 69, 77, 107.

[2] The late Mr. E. J. W. Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry*. Mr. Gibb died on December 5, 1901, little more than a year after the publication of the first volume of this great work. The remaining five volumes, of which the last (vol. vi) contained the Turkish originals of the poems translated in vols. i–v, were edited by myself, at the request of his widow and parents, from the carefully written and well-arranged manuscript materials which were found amongst his papers. A seventh volume, dealing with the most modern period, is in course of preparation.

gence, as well as by the distinction of their manners, and I am glad to find the impression left on my mind by this single occasion entirely confirmed by Miss Ellison's much more extended experience. Knowing how absurd and baseless are many of the opinions about the Turks and Islam entertained in Europe (so that, to take one instance only, people who ought to know better constantly re-assert the oft-repeated calumny that in the Mohammedan faith the existence of a soul is denied to women), I was prepared to find Turkish ladies much more intelligent and better educated than is generally supposed; but the reality greatly exceeded my expectations. Of their profound patriotism Miss Ellison gives (on pp. 85–87) a moving example, and Mr. Morgan Shuster, at pp. 188–9 of his great book, *The Strangling of Persia*, has shown that in this quality the Persian women do not fall short of their Turkish sisters.

Nothing has so greatly retarded the evolution of the Muslim nations as the backwardness of their women, seeing that in the formation of the children's characters it is nearly always the mother who plays the chief part. Polygamy, as Miss Ellison points out, is so much rarer than is generally supposed in Europe, save in the wealthiest classes and especially in the royal household, that its evils have probably been exaggerated; but, for the reasons set forth on

p. 96 of this book, happy and suitable marriages are rarer in the East than in Europe. The changes in this respect which are now taking place, and with which this book largely deals, are not the least of the blessings conferred by the Revolution of 1908, and though it is at present the fashion in the English press to disparage that revolution, which was at first hailed with so much apparent enthusiasm, I cannot understand how any one who knew Turkey both before and after it can deny or ignore the vast improvement which it has effected not only in the happiness but in the moral and intellectual condition of the people. In our own country the contemplation of a Liberalism which takes Tsardom as its ideal, a Conservatism which coquets with lawlessness and makes two such reactionary measures as Conscription and Protection, the chief "constructive features" of its programme, a Cabinet which pays less and less heed to Parliament, a Parliament which grows ever less and less in touch with public opinion, and a Press which tends increasingly to make the selection rather than the collection of news its main object, has produced a political pessimism, the like of which few living men can remember, which makes it difficult for us to believe in the reality of any political enthusiasm, or to understand what emancipation means to a people who have just emerged from centuries of despotism. The bright

hopes born in Turkey in 1908 and in Persia two years earlier have, indeed, been sorely dimmed, when not entirely extinguished, less through the faults or shortcomings of the patriotic elements in these countries than through the Machiavellian cynicism and materialistic greed of the Great Powers of Europe, who least of all desired any real reform in the lands which they had already marked down for their spoliation. Yet even should Turkey and Persia unhappily perish and cease to be counted amongst the free and independent nations of the world, the historians of the future will pay the tribute of admiration withheld by the politicians and journalists of to-day to their last splendid struggles for freedom, independence, and reform. For truly says one of the Arabian poets :

Kam máta qawmᵘⁿ wa má mátat makárimu-hum,
Wa 'ásha qawmᵘⁿ wa hum fi'n-nási amwátu !

" Many a people's virtues survive when themselves are sped,
And many a people linger who are counted by men as dead ! "

It cannot, of course, be denied that the Turkish reformers (much more, in my opinion, than the Persians) made several frightful mistakes, the worst of which was the vain and disastrous attempt to Turkify or Ottomanize the various non-Turkish elements of the Ottoman Empire, a matter in which their policy contrasted very unfavourably with that pursued by the late Sultan

'Abd-ul-Hamíd. This grievous error, like many lesser ones, was largely due, in my opinion, to the French influences which played so large a part, both in the political and the literary field, in the evolution of the "New Turks" (*Yeñi Turkler*), or, as they are commonly though absurdly styled (now even by themselves) "Young Turks." The French are, indeed, more chauvinistic, more intolerant of languages, customs and ideas other than their own, in a word more "insular," than the English; and from the time of Kemál and Shinásí, the founders of the "Young Turkish" school, until that of Ahmed Rizá Bey, Dr. Názim, 'Alí Kemál, and others who took a prominent part in recent events, French ideas have dominated the Turkish reformers. So, just as the French discourage the use of the Breton language in Brittany, and endeavour to impose their own tongue on the inhabitants of that Celtic province, the "Young Turks" endeavoured to impose their language on the Arabs and Armenians, and their alphabet on the Albanians, while at the same time, with a strange inconsistency, they were ruining the Turkish language by hasty and ill-considered attempts to "reform" its spelling and to modify or even entirely change the Arabic characters in which, like all other Muhammadan languages, it is written.

I agree so entirely with nearly everything that

Miss Ellison says as to the true democracy [1] and hospitality [2] of the Turks, their kindness to the poor,[3] their sincerity and unceremoniousness, the humane character of the "slavery," with the toleration of which they have been reproached, and the like, that it seems ungracious to dissent from a statement which she makes on pp. 104–5 as to the New School of Turkish poetry. She quotes an opinion as to the value of this modern poetry expressed by my late friend, Mr. E. J. W. Gibb (than whom in all that concerns Turkish literature no greater authority can be adduced), for which I also appear to be made responsible, as also, perhaps, for the preceding implication that the Turks often excelled their earlier Persian exemplars. This, I feel bound to state, is not my view. Whatever comparisons may be instituted between the Turks and Persians, and in whatever points the former may be deemed superior to the latter, in literary skill and poetic talent there can, in my opinion, be no comparison whatever. Turkish poetry, whether old or new, is at best seldom more than pretty and graceful, while often the verses of even comparatively unknown Persian poets (let alone such masters of the art as Jalálu'd Dín Rúmí, Sa'dí, Háfiz and Jámí) touch the sublime. The production of fine poetry may not be the highest aim of man, or the object for which he was created, but, what-

[1] Pp. 21, 45, 54. [2] P. 22. [3] P. 52.

ever this distinction may be worth, some of the finest poetry in the world has been produced by the Persians, and no one, I think, however great an admirer of the Turks he may be, could make this assertion about them.

In what concerns the languages and literatures of Western and Central Asia, I must, I fear, admit that I am what my learned and versatile Turkish friend, Dr. Rizá Tevfiq, sometime Deputy of Adrianople in the Ottoman Parliament, and commonly known in Turkey as "*Feylesúf Rizá*" ("Rizá the Philosopher"), calls Mu'allim Nájí, the last great champion of the old or classical style in Turkey, "*un réactionnaire décidé*," and it is with certain tendencies of the "Young Turks" in this domain of philology and letters that I find myself least in sympathy. I have already alluded to certain innovations in spelling which appear to me deplorable, and to several still more deplorable attempts to modify or abolish that beautiful Arabian character which is one of the strongest bonds uniting all Muhammadan nations; and I must add a few words of disapproval of that fantastic movement, briefly referred to on pp. 67–8 of this book, known as "The New Turanian" (*Yeñi Túrán*). Against the attempts of this school to revive the use of obsolescent Turkish words and to displace in their favour the equivalent, and at present much more familiar, Persian and Arabic vocables, I

have nothing to say; there is no more reason why a Turk should not endeavour to persuade his countrymen to call God "*Tañri*" instead of "*Alláh*," or fire "*üd*" instead of "*átesh*," than there is why an Englishman should not strive to oust from his language the words "Preface" and "Introduction" in favour of "Foreword," or even "photograph" in favour of "light-bild" (as some few have done), provided always that he is not so archaic and Anglo-Saxon as to be totally unintelligible. My objection to the "Young Turanian" School is their hatred of Arabic and Persian culture and desire to cut themselves altogether adrift from them, and their grotesque ideal not merely of a Pan-Turkish but of a Turanian world-empire, which should exclude Arabs, Persians, and other non-Turanian Muhammadan elements, but should on the other hand include not only Tartars and Mongols, but even Bulgarians. To such strange lengths does the distorted Nationalism of these "New Turanians" extend that they blame their own great Sultan Báyezíd, "the Thunder-bolt," because, not recognizing his "Turanian overlord," he strove to arrest the devastating advance of Tamerlane the Tartar, and perished in the attempt. To me the aims of this school, so far as I understand them, appear little less insane than those of Marinetti and the Italian Futurists. Far truer, saner and more reasonable is the

Pan-Islamic ideal of Sayyid Jamálu'd-Dín al-Afghání, whose body rests, after the storm and stress through which it passed, in the cemetery of Nishán-Tásh in Constantinople.

These, however, are comparatively small matters, the inevitable exuberances of a great National Awakening. However we may appraise the "Committee of Union and Progress" or the "Liberals," Enver Pasha, Tal'at, Jávíd and Ahmed Rizá on the one hand, or Kyámil Pasha, Dámád Feríd Pasha and Isma'íl Kemál on the other, let us render all honour to the noble and often nameless and fameless Turkish patriots, both men and women, who by their lives and deaths have during the last eight years striven so gallantly to save and free their country; and, when we think of their mistakes, let us remember what the Turkish poet says:—

"*Yár-siz qálir kimesné 'ayb-siz yár isteyan!*"

"Friendless surely he remaineth who demands a faultless friend!"

EDWARD G. BROWNE

CAMBRIDGE, *May 5, 1914.*

AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN A TURKISH HAREM

AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN A TURKISH HAREM

CHAPTER I

BACK TO THE HAREM

IT is a landscape of unending and beautiful sadness which surrounds the Konak where I am now living. In my home away yonder I had imagined that where the sun shines there must be laughter and merriment, yet here, face to face with reality, the sun, the bright blue sky, and clear atmosphere have steeped everything around —the mosques, the minarets, and mournful cypress trees, which stretch towards heaven like a prayer, with that inexplicable sadness which is the basis of Oriental life.

How could I have expected to find laughter and merriment in a landscape like this? Here happiness even is expressed in some form of sadness; the people's songs of rejoicing are like funeral hymns; the sweetest poetry is sad beyond our Western comprehension; the tales the old slave tells us as we sit cross-legged round the

big mangol are of sadness so great that I often wonder whence they come, and yet, paradox of paradoxes, I have come back to Stamboul to laugh, for I have never laughed anywhere as I have in this land of extremes and contradictions and surprises.

. . . . .

And now, after five years, here I am back again enjoying once more the calm and peace of an Eastern home, and the interesting society of my dear friend Fâtima (I change the name). To the Western ear, to be staying in a Turkish harem sounds alarming, and not a little—yes, let us confess it—improper. When, before I left my own country, I had the imprudence to tell a newspaper correspondent that I was longing to get back to the quiet harem existence, I was accused of "advocating polygamy," for to the uninitiated the word "harem" means a collection of wives, legitimate or otherwise, and even the initiated prefers to pretend he knows no other meaning.

Worn out with what we in the West call pleasures of society, the fatigue of writing against time, the rush and bustle of our big Western capitals, the hideous and continual noise of the traffic, which, like a great roaring wave, seems gradually to deaden one's understanding; how good it is to be here!

The wonderful silence! Sometimes it is almost terrifying! And at nights when I rise and peep

through the lattice windows and see the beautiful moon bathing with its silver magnificence the silent, sleeping city and the calm, quiet Marmora beyond, it is difficult to believe that there are living souls in these dimly lighted streets, and the Bekjih's tap, tap, tapping on the cobbled stones sounds, in the stillness, like some spirit rapping from another world.

Yet much as I am drinking in the beauty of my new surroundings, they do not in the least force me to write. In this wonderful garden of God, for here one feels so keenly a divine presence in every living thing, ideas surge through the brain; every nerve, every sense tingles with the beauty around; one becomes part and parcel of its grandeur, but alas! the thoughts vanish before they even come to any precision. Encircled by such Nature, how can one write? "You in your Western cities," once said to me a Dervishe of the contemplative order, "have you time or place or opportunity for contemplation?" No doubt he was right, yet, like all those Turks who are privileged to make their choice, we are dwelling on a height, and, like the Dervishe, we have time, place, and opportunity for contemplation. But do we ever get beyond contemplation?

The diary of my existence as a Turkish woman, which in England I imagined could be written in a very short while, lies day after day in the form of a pencil and exercise book, untouched,

on the little mother-of-pearl table in the most comfortable corner of my large bedroom. "To-morrow," I say, like a true Turkish woman, and alas! in Turkey it takes a few to-morrows to beget "some day"; "some day" is soon changed into "never," and who knows whether the best of my Turkish impressions will not be given "their local habitation and name" in a room of some Continental hotel?

Now I understand how weeks and months, years even, may pass without receiving news from Turkish friends; now I understand that lack of what we English call "common courtesy." We have misjudged the Turks. A pen in the harem! The unnecessary intrusion! The reforming fever which has swept over the land of Islam ever since the Constitution has not yet taught the Turkish women the use of a pen as we understand it. When I reproached my friend and hostess with not having written one letter, "Why should I write," she asked; "what have I to say? You know exactly how every moment of my life is being spent. You know my affection for you, and when two friends are really sure of one another's sympathy, each can feel the thoughts the other is thinking. . . ." And so we took up the threads of the conversation where we had left them five years ago.

Fâtima did not know I was coming to Constantinople. She was not dead, of that I was sure, so I should find her, no matter into what

part of Turkey she might have wandered. But the news of my arrival reached my friend almost as soon as I had found her address. She came at once to see me at the hotel. A Turkish woman visiting me at an hotel! Was it possible? Five years ago what would not have been her punishment for such reckless *licence*? The customs of the country do not yet, however, allow Turkish women to visit hotels, and in taking every step forward she has to run the risk of offending the ignorant and fanatical mob.

Fâtima did not come in by the front entrance. Quite recently a restaurant for "ladies only" has been opened by the same management as the hotel where I stayed and is, to some extent, a rendezvous for Turkish women. It is their first step towards a "fashionable" club, and to me, the newcomer, another big step towards freedom. Let those Western critics, who have taken such a deliberate stand against the present government and declared "the new order of things worse than the old," take into consideration such details as the opening of a restaurant for Turkish women. It is part of a great scheme of reform, and everything is going on in proportion. In 1908 more than two men sitting at a café together were "suspect" and reported at headquarters; in 1913 Turkish *women* meet in a restaurant and discuss political subjects—certainly this is not the Turkey I expected to see. . . .

Having some work to finish that day, I had

woman—Fâtima who had so persistently resisted the European civilization at her very door, if it in any way prevented her remaining faithful to the traditions of her own civilization and religion.

. . . . .

But at last we are there. Fâtima has come to the door to meet me and hugs me into the big salon. There are the same tiny cigarettes, the same coffee cups, the same endless rows of bon-bon boxes filled with the delicious candies of the East, the same liqueurs, the same array of cakes, and we walk and talk as though miles and years had never separated us.

But the sun is now sinking to rest. It is our dinner-hour, the candles are being lighted, the darlingest little baby girl toddles in to bid her mother good-night and make the acquaintance of her new "aunt." Kissing my hand, she raises it to her forehead with the grace of a little Empress. Dear little Perihan with the beautiful, wide-awake, brown eyes! Will your destiny be like that of the great Eastern Princess whose name you bear?

CHAPTER II

"TIME'S FOLDED WINGS"

BUT to return to the burden of letter-writing. Another Turkish friend, a lady who has stayed in England, considers one of the most disagreeable features of our civilization is our continual answering of letters. "Unnecessary letters," she called them, "and I pitied my poor hostess," she explained, "wasting the greater part of her morning choosing where she would or would not eat and asking friends to eat with her." Here our friends come uninvited, they take what we at home call "pot luck" with delightful and refreshing unceremoniousness.

But the greatest obstacle to one's writing, setting aside the atmosphere, is the lack of solitude. Here there is, except for the honoured guest, the solitude of the multitude and the silence of familiarity, but solitude, as we understand it in the West, *i.e.* one's own self within one's own room, and the door locked, never. And I doubt very much as I write these lines whether solitude and its near relative, celibacy,

will ever be admitted or even understood in these Eastern homes.

Several times, however, when the thought of dear friends in my home away yonder has pricked my conscience I have escaped to my room to write. But my maid for the moment, Cadhem Haïr Calfat (Calfat means slave), an elegant negress, follows me to see what she can do for me. I am seated on the sofa —she uses the word "esbab," and I understand the word "esbab" means "dress"—I shake my head. No, I will not change my dress. I hear "sou" (water). I shake my head again. I washed a short while ago. "Satch" (hair). No, my hair is quite in order. I pass my hand over my forehead, and move my fingers, to make her understand I want to write. She thinks I am ill, and runs to fetch my hostess, who hastens to find out what is wrong. She, too, fails to understand why I go to my bedroom to write in solitude when I could write at a big desk in the salon with the other ladies to keep me company.

But what a devoted creature is my chocolate-coloured attendant! With what patience she tries to make me understand! Not a stitch of clothing will she allow me to put on by myself, and only when I am safely tucked up under my mosquito net does she leave me alone. And what would she say now if by any chance the idea should enter her faithful woolly head to come and see whether I am all right? Here I am, outside my

mosquito net, writing by the candle light till the scratch, scratching of my pen sounds almost terrifying in this still household and the silence of the night.

The other afternoon, on returning from our afternoon drive, lady visitors arrived. Here was my opportunity to write. So, after we had drunk our coffee and smoked a cigarette, I excused myself, went upstairs, and Miss Chocolate (as my negress is now called by all my friends) removed my tcharchaff (veil and cape). By the time, however, that I could make her understand her service was finished for the moment, the sun began to set, with a magnificence only to be seen in the East. I stepped on to the balcony. From the minaret of the neighbouring mosque a clear, wonderful voice rings through the air, calling the faithful to prayer. I hear also the muezzins, in the distance, singing the Moslem credo; it is like an echo, for every note in the scale is a faint repetition of the beautiful voice which wakes me at the break of dawn with a reminder of the greatness of God—and all the while the sky is increasing in warmth, now it has formed itself into a wonderful vermilion carpet, and wrapped the mournful cypress trees and mosques and minarets which rest upon it, with a wealth of the finest azure blue, and even the wooden houses on the neighbouring hills have changed into little ochre palaces, so distinct that they seem to have been put there as an after-

thought. Then there is the beautiful Sea of Marmora, cloaked in a mass of purple and red and blue and gold. Could any spectacle be more gorgeous? How well now I understand those beings who worship the sun!

The visitors have taken their departure—they must be home before the sun has set completely. My friend has now joined me. On the balcony we stand and watch in silence. We, too, have become part of the glorious landscape; we, too, are bathed in the wonderful roseate tints of the setting sun. . . . The sun has set. Miss Chocolate is there, to dress me for our evening meal . . . and my letters are still unwritten. And so the time flies on, and we, unaware of its flight, are happy enough. Letters belong to the West—energy belongs to the West—but the sunset and the dreams and the beautiful, calm felicity which I now enjoy is the inheritance of the Woman of the East.

But, supposing my letters are written, how am I to post them? English letters have to be sent from Galata. It means that a domestic must drive to Galata and post them. That, too, is not so easy as it sounds. I have been trying to work out for myself this problem; if it is the custom of this country to grant two holidays a week to the donkey, how many are necessary for the coachman and gardener? I look into the garden; perhaps I see my answer in the person of the mountainous-bodied gardener, who stands,

spade in hand, watching the flowers grow and the fruit falling from the trees. How can the inhabitants of a country of tubes and motor-'buses and telephones understand what life is like here? A distance requiring ten minutes with us would take here quite three hours, at least with Réchad, our coachman, on the box. Of him, certainly, it may be said he is merciful unto his beasts. They need not hurry unless they like; he never whips them; and although my friend and I together weigh less than 18 stone, the horses are allowed "a pause" at the top of each fairly steep hill.

My short stay here shows me more and more clearly how impossible it is to keep up with Western customs with all these Oriental disadvantages. For the first two or three days it may be exasperating, but the philosopher soon becomes resigned. I cannot get about if there are no means of communication, he argues, and his Western friends leave him severely alone.

The night before the Messageries Maritimes steamer arrived at Constantinople we anchored near Haidar Pasha. It was nine o'clock, but too late for the fulfilment of certain Turkish red-tapisms which make commercial life unnecessarily complicated. "See," said a diplomatist on board to me, pointing to the two shores of the Bosphorus—"Europe and Asia—action and dreams—energy and fatalism—liberty and bondage." And the lights from the European shore were shedding their brilliance on to the cool, calm

the tourist she appears as veiled and secluded as ever, yet she has advanced so rapidly that I, after an absence of five years, scarcely know her.

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," says our proverb, and poor consolation though it seems, it is heavy misfortune which has been the lot of poor Turkey, which has banded the women together, brought out all their best qualities and determined them, with Western militancy, to save their Fatherland at all costs.

It is time Europe saw the Turkish woman as she really is; saw her splendidly organized Red Crescent Society, her woman's paper edited by a woman, her programme for the national health, for the training of nurses and doctors, and even telephone clerks, for the near future. Surely, honour should be given where honour is due, and although, for reasons I will explain later, it will be some time before the Turkish woman can or before it would be wise for her to cast aside the veil, she is not what Europe generally imagines she is. She has awakened from the darkness and horror of the Hamidian régime with a courage and determination to show the world that one sex cannot govern a country, that the woman's voice must be heard in every matter of importance—not in the anonymous manner of yore, but openly and honestly and above-board, as is her right—and that if one sex is to be kept in ignorance it shall not be the women.

I have faith in the women of Turkey. With education—for these women, though of great culture, are not educated—they will acquire the necessary perseverance and exactitude, the lack of which keeps the Turkish woman behind the rest of Europe. With improved means of communication and organized work, too, her character will develop. She can take her place splendidly in a big cause. Whence she acquires her extraordinary courage, sangfroid, and savoir faire I do not know, but it is the details that worry her; she loses patience, and that terrible "To-morrow I will do it," which is partly due to the climate and partly the inheritance of ages, has been till now the Turkish woman's stumbling-block in all she undertakes.

I asked Halidé-Hanoum, perhaps the most active and best known of modern Turkish women, in the name of one of our prominent suffrage societies, how we English women could help the Turkish women in their advancement. "Ask them," she said, "to delete for ever that misunderstood word 'harem,' and speak of us in our Turkish 'homes.' Ask them to try and dispel the nasty atmosphere which a wrong meaning of that word has cast over our lives. Tell them what our existence really is."

And so here I am in the heart of Stamboul, a Turkish woman for the time being. Only by living the life of another people can we have any idea of the real value of that people. By

sinking for a while one's own personality one obtains the recompense of superior knowledge, and I have been received in a Turkish home and offered hospitality it would be difficult to equal in any other land.

Halidé-Hanoum paid a very pretty compliment to the energy, indomitable courage, and self-sacrifice of so many of the women of my country. If, then, the Eastern women can understand the tactics of a section of women workers which so many men and women of my own country have covered with ridicule and injustice, surely we in England should try to understand better the Turkish women, for it is to us they still turn for guidance, example, and, above all, sympathy.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

HALIDÉ HANOUM, THE BEST KNOWN OF TURKISH WOMEN WRITERS AND A LEADER OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT

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CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND AND ATMOSPHERE

THE Turkish home in which I am staying at present has little in common with the harem described by most Western writers, and no doubt those readers accustomed to the *usual* notions of harem life will consider my surroundings disappointingly Western.

Had I been able, as I hoped, to send some photographs of the interior of my friend's house, those photographs would probably be considered "fakes," or perhaps even they might be returned (as they were returned to me when I last stayed in Turkey five years ago) with the comment, "This is not a Turkish harem."

For a long time now, European furniture has been the fashion in Turkish homes. At first this craze for everything Western began in the homes of the Government officials, but it has been gradually spreading ever since, so that to-day, in the smaller homes, cheap, gaudy furniture of the worst kind has replaced the beautiful embroideries and accoutrements of the East. And now the pendulum will swing the other way. With this

new movement of "Turkey for the Turks," thinking women like my hostess, who look round their houses to-day, must necessarily ask themselves the question, "Is this really a Turkish home?" With as much zeal, then, as she showed in filling her house with the ornaments of the lands she longs to visit, my friend Fâtima has now begun to collect the furniture, ornaments, and embroideries for the real Turkish room which is to be mine when next I visit this country. Day after day we have sauntered through the old bazaar, which is always an attraction for a woman of the West, buying those quaint and delightful souvenirs of the Turkey of the past, in much the same way as we English who can afford it indulge our tastes for the furniture and porcelain of a century that is gone. And when we visit the mosques, too, and the sacred tombs, we generally come away with ideas for "my Turkish room," so that next time I come to Turkey I shall not have the disappointment of travelling all these miles to sleep in a room furnished with an Empire suite (however beautiful it may be), a Western sofa, armchairs, and tables.

Sometimes in the morning when I wake I still wonder where I really am. Am I in Europe, or am I in Asia? My room is as large as any of the largest rooms in our country houses at home, and its ceiling and high walls are painted with the primitive gaudy colouring seen in the mosques. Fortunately there are seven windows, for there is

no open fireplace, and the room is carpeted from end to end. A solid silver basin and jug of the real Eastern shape are on my washstand, the rest of the toilet service is French, and there is a Venetian glass bon-bon service, with sweets, liqueurs, and other drinks, beside my bed, and tables—tables of all nations. One table put there specially for my use was a gift from the late Pope Leo XIII. to my friend's father, and on it stands a Bible which my friend, though a Moslem, often reads. On another table stands a signed portrait of Great Britain's King and Queen, removed for a short while from its place of honour in the big salon as a sign of my friend's great affection for one of their Majesties' humble subjects. It was a most delightful and delicately turned compliment. But there are pictures in my room, too, pictures in a Moslem house! A print water-colour of Windsor Castle and copies of two of Reynolds's pictures in the National Gallery, and many English books. Is it surprising that when I look round this curious room I wonder whether I really am in Turkey?

The more I stay in Turkey the more I admire the inborn aristocracy of the Turk, and yet "aristocracy" as we understand it does not exist. Turkey is the country where brotherhood and equality have been best understood. The Turkish woman does not often open the doors of her home to the foreigner, not for lack of any friendly feeling towards her, but because the

foreigner has lost her confidence, the foreigner has made fun of her, and, above all, the foreigner "pities" her. But when the Turkish woman opens her door to the foreigner, she opens her big, generous heart. Always, however intimate may be their conversations, the honoured guest stands on a pedestal, and the hostess is at her feet longing only for an opportunity of showing courtesy and kindness. In no other land have I met with such lavish hospitality—hospitality even that makes one feel a little uncomfortable, especially when one realizes how little one has done to deserve it. The courtesy, also, is almost overwhelming. Every time I go in and out of the room the assembled company, men and women, stand, and every time coffee, cigarettes, and sweets are brought by the slaves for the guests, my hostess rises to serve me herself. Always, too, I sit in the place of honour, as far away from the door as possible, and sometimes right in the draught of the window!

It is the custom, too, for the master of the house to pay all the visitor's bills. That I should have proposed to stamp my own letters hurt my friend. The result is that, nowadays, I write no letters and buy practically nothing. I feel almost guilty when I accept what I do and give nothing in return, and always I have before me the haunting fear of the terrible disappointment my friend will have when she visits my country, for our hospitality cannot be compared to this.

When I asked my friend how long she expected me to stay, she was surprised at my question. "As long as ever you like; you need never go away; how I wish you would stay always." And so it is in most Turkish houses. There are guests here who came, as I did, for a few days, but they have never gone away at all; some even came to visit Fâtima's grandfather, and still they remain; they have become part of the house itself.

Fâtima has put her entire trousseau at my disposal. Many of the stuffs and embroideries were brought to her when she was a child by her father's friends. They made a special pilgrimage from the depths of Asia Minor to bring their offerings to the daughter of the "father of the people," as the ex-Pasha was known for many years. I take out these precious gifts sometimes and examine them at leisure, trying to imagine the arrival of the "wise men" of the East to pay honour to the father of the little baby girl lying in the cradle. For these pilgrims were, many of them, real "wise men" of the East, and they brought, amongst other garments, a coat I am to wear when I dine with European friends, but I am sure to tremble all the evening for its safety. The tissue itself is pale blue silk, the yoke, collar, and cuffs all studded with precious stones. It is a present from Mecca, and it lies with the other priceless possessions in my room—jewels, linen, embroideries, money, and letters too, in drawers that have no locks, and in a house

where all day long the doors are left open for any to enter who will. Truly, this is a restful civilization!

It was nine o'clock this morning before I tinkled the little silver bell beside my bedstead to summon my "chocolate" attendant. This is a very old Turkish house, and in spite of its Western furniture it rejoices in neither electric bells nor electric light. As a rule, however, my negress is in my room, patiently waiting till I wake, not daring, although she has been asked to do so, to disturb my sleep. Miss Chocolate, clad in a scarlet-coloured dress, her woolly head tied up with a scarlet scarf, brings in two silver trays, on which my breakfast is served. Her skin is like brown velvet. Round her neck she wears a gold necklace, and on her arms she has clanging bangles, which announce her arrival. On one tray Miss Chocolate has collected all kinds of jams, varying from quince to strawberry and violet, and many kinds of biscuits; on the other there are Turkish coffee, milk, powdered chocolate, and tea. Fâtima is generally present to see that I do honour to this curious repast.

My breakfast finished, I follow Miss Chocolate into the marble bath-room attached to my bedroom. But it is not a bath-room which is in the least designed to accompany the Empire suite in my room. A real Eastern bath-room it is, *i.e.* it has a marble floor with a gutter, so that all the water thrown over me runs away, and it contains

MISS "CHOCOLATE"

also the marble basin like a fountain in which the Turks wash, always in running water. The morning after my arrival here I took advantage of Miss Chocolate's leaving me alone for a few minutes to plug up the marble basin, and began to wash as we wash in Europe. But Miss Chocolate returned sooner than I expected, and with much the same expression as the mother who scolds a child who has been playing in the mud, she extracted the handkerchief which served as my plug. "Ach, mattemoiselle," she exclaimed, in Turkish. "What a horrid way to wash!" And she is astonished to see my skin so white—now she knows I have washed all my life in dirtied water. Also when, after meal-time, she pours the water over my hands, she carries away first the basin of dirty water, and then comes back to fetch the jug, thinking it wiser no doubt to keep temptation out of my way.

But not only Miss Chocolate, most of the Turkish women I have met dislike our manner of washing. Indeed, they consider it dangerous to sit in a bath which is not exclusively reserved for their own use. Were they only in other ways to show this fear of spreading disease! But cleanliness, as every one knows, is godliness itself in the Moslem religion, and no doubt the Eastern bath-room will exist even after the veil has disappeared.

Miss Chocolate interests me. She certainly is an excellent maid. She sews well, keeps my

clothes well brushed and tidy, washes me well, and has an unending capacity for taking pains. By degrees I shall find out her life history, as I shall find out, perhaps, before I go, the names and social status of all these women here, but I have to work slowly and carefully, lest my sympathetic interest should be mistaken for idle curiosity, and so far I have found out little about my faithful negress. Bought at the age of four by the Pasha, Fâtima's father, for the sum of forty Turkish pounds, she has a record of twenty-five years' faithful servitude. But that is all I know. Since the Constitution, the sale of slaves and eunuchs has been forbidden, and all those at present employed in the house have been offered their liberty. Every slave in this household has, however, refused her liberty, preferring to keep to the original terms of her contract—her freedom only on marriage, with a dowry from the Pasha. Slavery, then, can be considered as no longer existing, and only a few eunuchs remain in the palaces to remind us of an ugly chapter of history that is closed.

Miss Chocolate's features show that she must first have seen the daylight somewhere in the neighbourhood of Lake Tchad. Many lies have been told about the treatment of these slaves, but Miss Chocolate has never been beaten, she receives only kindness; she is invited, with all the other members of the "domestic sisterhood," to see us dance and hear the Western music when we dance

and sing in the evenings, but generally we read and sew. And yet never does she nor any other slave take advantage of her mistress's familiarity, standing always at the door, although bidden to come in. And she has a heart of gold. When she saw my face so covered with mosquito bites that I was unfit almost to look upon, the tears ran down her brown cheeks. "And to think," she said, as she rubbed in the ointment, "they might have eaten the whole of my face and it would not have mattered"—the mosquitoes evidently preferred mine.

Before I leave this house I hope to get some photos of the interesting persons it contains, but in undertaking to photograph a Turkish household, I had forgotten first that the windows are dimmed by the inevitable lattice-work, which prevents my having a full view of the wonderful landscape which stretches from the foot of our garden to the rising and setting sun, and when the sun shines it shines through the lattices, throwing on to the furniture all around large lozenge-shaped reflections. But there is another and a greater difficulty, and that is, photography is forbidden by the Moslem religion. My friend would certainly let me photograph the house if I asked her. The sacred law of hospitality is part of her religion. She urged me even to eat bacon in the morning, although pork is forbidden in an Eastern house, and no doubt she would have insisted on buying it had I not declared that even

in my own country I never eat pork. But Fâtima has to deal with a most fanatical entourage, the women much more than the men, women who for centuries have been taught to interpret the Koran as Mahomet never intended it should be interpreted, women who are purblind to any form of progress, women who still consider that to reproduce the human form created by God involves disobedience to the laws of the Prophet, though the Koran distinctly orders the faithful to march on with the centuries.

It is extraordinary and interesting to watch the working of this household. My host, an exceedingly well-read, intelligent officer, speaking two European languages, and having served three years in the German army, is a man with ideas of feminism and government and social questions quite half a century before his time, and he is surrounded by a household of ignorant fanatics who can neither read nor write. He would give his wife complete liberty this very day if it were possible, and, although she has more liberty than any woman I know, for her sake he cannot too openly defy Islam. The other day one of his brother officers lunched with us in the harem, but we were served by the male servants, as every woman slave refused to appear with bare face before a man who was not a "blood relation" of the lady of the house.

There are some ladies here who blame the Turkish women for not taking their freedom as

other women have done; there are times, too, when I feel inclined to sigh for the militant spirit of the Englishwoman, but until one has really been behind the veil one can have no idea of what "fanaticism" really means. Isolated rebellion is of no use—a protest here and there may, or may not, help, but a movement only really counts when women march out in an army, and nothing will ever make them turn back, and there is no fear of death.

The day I first visited my friend Zeyneb in the Turkish home which she left six years ago, and to which she has now returned, the sight of me in a hat made her forget her surroundings, and, as she always did in Paris, she eagerly seized my new hat and tried it on. But she had not counted with the picturesque old lady seated cross-legged in the corner of the room alternately smoking and embroidering. The old lady wore a red tunic and green pantaloons; her tobacco and matches she kept under the arm-chair near which she worked. She, too, had come on a visit to Zeyneb's grandmother, and never gone away again. Perfectly contented with her lot, as are the women of the last generation, she saw no reason why the children of this generation should sigh for a horizon that goes beyond embroidery, cigarettes, and sweetmeats, especially when it brings them to forget the sacred commands of the Prophet. The old lady, at the sight of my heathenish hat on Zeyneb's head, muttered some-

thing about the giaour I could not understand, ground her teeth (she is eighty, and still has her teeth), and cast at both of us a look of the most profound contempt. Then it was I first understood what the women of this country must put up with whenever they try to take a step forward.

"And supposing you were to go into the street with that hat, what would happen?" I asked Zeyneb.

"The old lady would rouse the neighbourhood, we should be seized by an angry mob, and trampled to death. . . ." I made no comment. It is not for me to criticize the methods of the women who are working for liberty. "These old women are not immortal," I am assured; "we are concentrating all our efforts on the future generation and educating the people. The rest will come by itself."

The women are fortunate, however, in having the Government on their side, and without exaggeration I may say they have with them most of the men who count at all, for what thinking man could see any chance of progress while this absurd separation of the sexes continues? I don't say the Turk wants for his womenkind the liberty of the English or American women. He does not even want them to work, but he does want them, for his sake, to take part in the social life going on around them. The Turk likes society, and he likes theatres, but to-day, unless he has married a Christian woman, he must go

there by himself, borrow some one else's wife, or stay at home.

"Why should I go out and amuse other people's wives and leave my own wife at home?" said my host one day; and very rarely does he go out in the evening; but all Turks are not like my host. The Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, a man of surprising energy, with a clear understanding of men and things, a real God-send to this country in its present state, encourages any work for the advancement of women, and he is paying particular attention to their education. The military governor of Constantinople, Djémal Bey, too, has given instructions that the liberty of the women is not to be interfered with, and no doubt in time his word will become law.

The women, however, as I said before, have made enormous progress in five years. What would have happened five years ago if Fâtima and I had driven home from a family party with her husband at the "indecent" hour of 9.30? Five years ago we never walked a step; now we not only saunter through the bazaar, but go to a big dressmaker's in Pera, whilst formerly all our goods had to be purchased from Greek merchants and Paris dressmakers who came with their goods to the harem. But not only in the bazaar do we walk; we have walked in the magnificent newly laid-out park, where women are allowed for the first time to walk, in a park where there are men. The men, I must say,

have not yet grown accustomed to this new and extraordinary state of things, and vie with the Levantine "mashers" in their desire to see the features under the veil. It is not a very comfortable experience for the Turkish women, but it is the darkness before the dawn. The dawn is coming slowly; but it will come if the Turkish woman really wishes it, and works always with that aim before her—the uplifting of her sex.

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPERIAL HAREM—A RECEPTION BY THE SULTAN

IT has been the privilege of many foreigners visiting Constantinople to witness the ceremony of *baise-main*, which takes place at the Dolma Bagtché Palace, but it does not fall to the lot of every woman to see that imposing ceremony from the Imperial harem. This unique and interesting experience I owe to my hostess, Fâtima.

The ceremony of baise-main is too well known for me to describe it here, and those persons who were seated in the gallery reserved for the Corps Diplomatique would no doubt see to better advantage than I the throne-room, the Sultan, and the curious and many-coloured uniforms and costumes of the Ottoman subjects who paid their homage to the Kaliph of Islam. Through the lattice-work windows of the Imperial harem it was difficult to form more than a vague idea of the ceremony, for we were so many women huddled together on the cushions, so many who were trying to see, that after a few moments I gave my seat to another lady in order to wander

at leisure through the Imperial harem, where Fâtima tells me I am the first Englishwoman to be admitted as a visitor.

It was the first day of Baïram. We were awakened at dawn by the plaintive cries of the sacrificed sheep. Réchad, the coachman, was chosen as vékil (sacrificer), because he is recognized by the whole household as the most pious of us all, and his forty-five years of service also demand that this privilege should be his. His, too, was the privilege of distributing the meat, the skin, and the horns of the four sheep which this Moslem household offered to the poor, who came in through the open gates like a pack of hungry wolves, and looked, with their poor ravenous eyes, as if they could tear the meat from the hands of the coachman. To me, standing on the balcony, it was like watching a scene from the Old Testament—a scene all out of focus with so many of the attempts at progress which I see around this beautiful and interesting capital.

How strange it seemed also to be dressing for Court at 6.30 in the morning! To be putting on thin silk evening dresses and slippers at that early hour, and driving away in the chilly morning to pay our homage to an Eastern monarch.

Fâtima's dress was of pink crêpe-de-chine embroidered in dull silver—a Paris creation—the last, however, she will ever have embroidered outside Turkey, for, like so many other

AN ENGLISHWOMAN WEARING A YASHMAK

ladies here, she has now awakened to the fact that the most costly embroideries of Europe are but poor imitations of the work of her own land. Round her hair she wore a pink and silver scarf, attached to the side by a silver rose, a charming variation of the curious turbans of flowers, feathers, and jewels which are worn by so many of the ladies attending the Ottoman Court. I asked Fâtima if the Court officials gave instructions to the ladies regarding their dress. "Provided their hair be decently covered," she replied, "etiquette is satisfied," and the Caliph has the "supreme" privilege of seeing all his subjects unveiled.

Like most of the ladies of the Court, we were attended by a slave, my negress, Miss Chocolate, an interesting personage in her Court attire. For this occasion she was dressed in pale blue satin, with a pale blue turban trimmed with pink roses, her fingers, arms, and neck being covered not only with all the jewellery she possessed, but the jewellery of the other slaves. It was her duty to follow us all the while, and during luncheon she stood inside the door with folded arms, in case her services should be required. It was she who took charge of our little bags, and in one of the "grandmother" pockets of her wide satin skirt were hair pins, safety pins, and handkerchiefs, in case of emergency. To drive to the Court, Miss Chocolate wore a white tulle veil which entirely covered her face, and a vivid

blue satin feridji, covered with sequins and big white velvet pansies. How I wish I could have photographed her! Fâtima wore a yashmak, now, alas! only worn by Princesses and ladies attending the Court, for to me it is one of the most becoming of head-dresses, showing the eyes to very great advantage. She wore, also, a peacock-blue satin feridji, a hideous contrast to Miss Chocolate's electric blue.

The Imperial harem, in spite of certain changes and certain privileges accorded to the Imperial Ottoman Princes and Princesses, still remains the harem in the real sense of the word, the harem about which Western readers expect to hear, the part of the Oriental house exclusively reserved for the use of the women. Across its threshold no man may enter, and even as we drove into the big door, which is inside another wooden door, and which is opened to admit each carriage and shut again immediately, our footman had to descend and wait for us outside the door. The whole Imperial harem is surrounded by a wall so high that no passer-by can possibly see within. The coachman, too, having left us at the entrance door, had to drive out and wait outside the first door.

This is the first time since I have been back again in Turkey that I have felt myself really within a harem. Even when I wear a veil, even when I forget I am not in England and try to push back the fixed lattice windows, even when

I take part in these Baïram dinners, where not even the master of the house may be present, I do not realize the atmosphere of the harem. But within the palace, amidst its curious assembly of slaves and eunuchs, and in spite of its wide corridors and immense salons, there is a most uncomfortable feeling of bondage which would turn me into a raving lunatic at the end of a week. It is true, Fâtima explains to me, that all these women are solemnly asked four times at the end of each year whether they would like to marry and leave the harem. I say to myself, then, if they stay it is because they wish to stay, and are therefore happy. Their existence, however, seems a most heartrending waste of human life, and as I sat watching them loitering along the exquisitely carpeted corridors, gossiping, smoking, carrying alternately coffee and water to the guests, I longed to break down for them the lattice-work which always is there between them and the sun, to fling the windows wide open, so that they could breathe in the fresh air, and open the doors so that they, too, might go out. And yet not one of these women seemed in the least to feel her slavery, and, no doubt, they would turn their backs in horror on the ugly, unprotected existence of some of the women of my country.

"But these slaves are perfectly happy," again and again Fâtima assured me, and, to judge from their smiling faces, I suppose they are. But

waste is always sad—waste of youth, waste of beauty, waste of womanhood, especially when women are so sorely needed for the regeneration of this country.

Arrived at the central entrance door of the harem, Fâtima and I were helped out of our carriage by the attendant eunuchs. I was told that eunuchs were now a thing of the past, but certainly that remark could not have been made with reference to the Imperial harem. It is difficult for me, however, to remember that these poor mutilated anachronisms are great personages at the Ottoman Court, who, although they perform the menial service of opening the carriage doors and helping us up the stairs (one on either side and one behind, as though we were old ladies), are yet the masters of the establishment. Fâtima explained to me that they spoke to her with the exaggerated politeness of the Eastern courtier, because of their affection for her father, and all of them came to ask for news of him.

At the first turning of the central staircase we walked into the yashmak room, where a host of female slaves came forward to help us. I felt for a moment as though I had strayed behind the scenes at Drury Lane, so curious they looked, in their brightly coloured figured silks and clashing coloured turbans, but their dyed hair and blackened eyes should be my excuse for the poor compliment I am paying them. Some of the costumes, it is true, were made of

those priceless Persian embroideries for which Fâtima and I have searched the market-place, but always the *tout ensemble* was spoilt by some vividly coloured and clashing turban, a vivid yellow dress with a bright pink head-dress, an electric-blue dress and an exaggeratedly blue turban, which made one's eyes ache. Behind the footlights, perhaps, such combinations could pass muster, but in the daylight, even in the dim daylight which comes through the latticed windows, they were a motley, uncomfortable spectacle. These dresses, however, defied both time and fashion, and were all cut on the same model ; a long dress, with the train caught up to the waist, and a sack jacket.

Once the yashmak and our cloaks were removed the slaves took away the veils to iron them, and other slaves arrived to conduct us upstairs and announce our arrival to the lady Court officials, who wore costumes of different colours according to their rank. There was, first of all, the Hasnadar Ousta, or High Controller of the establishment, in white satin, trimmed with real gold embroidery at the foot of her dress and at the bottom of her coat. Her little white and gold turban suited her perfectly, and her jewels, if not beautiful, at least were original. On her breast was a bouquet of diamond flowers, which stretched almost from shoulder to shoulder. Another diamond ornament stretched across the front of her turban, and in her ears she wore birds the

size of butterflies, each holding in its mouth a pearl the size of a cherry. She was an old lady, judging by her wrinkled face and bent back, rather than her golden hair, and after she had walked once or twice round the assembled ladies, kissing some and saluting others, leaning on her stick of office, she hobbled into the presence of one of the Princesses, leaving the real duties of the day to the younger officials.

I would have liked to ask one of the Court officials, had I dared, how our dresses appeared to them. The wife of the War Minister was wearing a dress of cerise *crêpe-de-chine*, so tight that she had to sit down carefully. All the ladies wore silk stockings and high-heeled shoes —most of them might have come straight out of the paper *Chiffons* which is carefully studied in up-to-date harems to-day. How strange we all must have looked to these uncorseted women, who made no attempt at a fashionable coiffure, who still remained faithful to the "babouches" (heelless slippers) and coloured stockings worked with gold, and whose dresses could have been made into three or four of our present-day creations.

Most of the Court officials wore the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Chefakat, the Order of Mercy given to ladies of high rank and distinguished lady visitors. Fâtima alone amongst the lady visitors wore that order. Every time the Court officials passed, the guests stood, as

the Eastern etiquette demands they should in the presence of superiors and aged ladies. This, however, was rather uncomfortable for us, for the Assistant Treasurer had known Fâtima's family all her life, and frequently came and spoke to us. Seeing us about to rise, with Eastern politeness she ordered us to remain seated, but Eastern politeness also demanded that we should disregard her request and rise to speak to her.

The Assistant Hasnadar was particularly interested in me when, after much beating about the bush, Fâtima at last owned that I had never had a husband. "We are companions in distress," said the Hasnadar, which in her case was not true, as I have already explained. A husband would be found for her to-morrow if she wished. But the wherefore of my celibacy puzzled her. "It is nothing of which to be ashamed," I protested. "It is nothing of which to be proud," she answered, and, like an Eastern woman when unable to reply, I shrugged my shoulders and laughed. The joys of "single blessedness" are not understood in this country, and personally, outside these high Court officials, I have never met an old Turkish spinster.

But supposing any of these women should take advantage of the solemn asking once a year, whether or no they will marry, what becomes of them? We have at present living in our harem a slave who has just left one of the Princess's palaces. Fâtima has undertaken to

keep her here until she and her friends can find a suitable husband for her. She is a contented, beautiful, useless creature, who eats with us when the young Bey is not here, and sings Oriental songs of exquisite pathos, accompanying herself on the oude.[1] And sometimes, when she sings, I ask Fâtima to interpret the words of them. "It is an old, old Turkish love-song," she said, "a beautiful old song, and I love to hear her sing it." "And what kind of love-song does a Turkish man sing to his unknown bride?" I asked. "That all the sorrows in the world may be his lot, if only all the joys may be hers." "And what is the most awful of all the sorrows?" I asked. "Solitude," answers Fâtima without hesitation.

We were a curious luncheon party that day—the wife of the Sultan's Master of Ceremonies, several of Fâtima's friends, and an Egyptian Princess, whose arrival at the Palace in a magnificent steam launch I had seen through the harem lattices. Most of these ladies, who spoke quite fluent French, were too timid to speak to me, a most distressing modesty, especially when it necessitates the constant employment of Fâtima as interpreter. If only they could hear how unmercifully most of us Englishwomen handle foreign languages, whilst they are really excellent linguists (the best in Europe, except, perhaps, the Russians), they surely would take courage.

The meal the Sultan offered us could scarcely

[1] Oude: Turkish guitar played with a feather.

be called a luncheon. There were cold meats of various kinds, sweatmeats, creams, and other delicacies, served in Sèvres dishes, but water was the only beverage. And after the meal was over, the slaves came round offering us glasses of water in beautifully cut crystal goblets, with gold lids, and served on little golden dishes. It was extraordinary to me to be bidden to an Emperor's feast and given only water to drink, and yet here water is so limpid and cold that it is often more acceptable than the best champagne, and often on the steamboat, when we travel, I call the water-seller, who frequently passes in and out of the harem part of the boat in which we travel, and purchase a penny glass of water.

The ceremony of baise-main in the Selamlik was finished about eleven. To the cry of "Oh, Sultan, be humble, and remember God is greater than you," from the assembled Court, the Sultan retired for a short rest before coming to the harem to receive the ladies of the Court. And, perhaps, he slept longer that day than he intended, for it seemed to us an eternity to wait. Eight hours at a Court, however, would be considered tiring in most countries, but most particularly in a harem where male conversation cannot be procured for untold gold. I begin to miss the society of the opposite sex: it is true we have men, far more men, in our Turkish home than in any other Turkish home I know, but I miss the

men at the parties and picnics and meetings. And it does seem rather a waste of time to put on my prettiest gowns and make a particularly handsome coiffure to eat only with women. Zeyneb used to say that "men spoiled the look of our Western functions; that they crawled about our drawing-rooms and ball-rooms like great black-beetles." Surely she had forgotten the appearance of an Ottoman Court and the awful black-beetles that crawl about there, when she spoke so disparagingly of our Western assemblies.

Fâtima explained to me that the Court of the present Sultan in no way equals the Court of the ex-Sultan in magnificence. The embroidery which the slaves hold in front of the coffee tray whilst coffee is being served was only a plain gold embroidery, whilst in Abdul Hamid's time the cloth was studded with real stones. The coffee cups, too, and the jam service were only solid gold, whilst in Abdul Hamid's time jewelled coffee cups were always used. The Court, however, has become more democratic. Princesses walk about amongst the people as they were not allowed to do during the reign of Abdul Hamid, and but for their red enamel necklaces and large diamond orders, exclusively worn by members of the Imperial family, we should have scarcely known we were amongst the members of the Imperial family. The Sultan's grand-daughter interested me particularly—not

so much because of her rank, but because of her appearance. She is a short girl for her age, which, I believe, is about twelve, but her dress was long and wide, her hair dressed in a knot on the top of her head inside a diamond crown, and the front of her small body was covered with diamond orders and a diamond dog-collar encircled her little throat. But most curious of all was the long, thin hand, quite out of proportion to the size of her body, with which she acknowledged our *temenahs* (Eastern salutations), and on those curious hands she wore gold mittens studded with rubies and diamonds. It looked as though she had utilized a gold purse for that purpose. She had a charming and interesting face, this little Princess, though one of unending sadness. She looked to me not unlike a schoolgirl acting the part of Queen Elizabeth, and a striking contrast to the merry little Princesses of her age in our Western countries.

But what is most delightful to me in Turkish life, in the Court and out of the Court, in fact in every station of life, is the beautiful feeling of democracy. A Princess, while talking to you, will suddenly excuse herself, rise and throw her arms round the neck of her old *nourrice*, who walks about amongst the highest of the Court ladies. The accident of high birth demands specially cultured conversation, kindness, and fine manners towards persons of humbler birth, argues the Turkish woman, and the *snobbery* which is

so frequent in our Western countries has never existed here.

But suddenly one becomes conscious of a certain movement amongst the ladies, who, in spite of the music of the Imperial orchestra playing in the garden of the palace, in spite of the Hasnadar's merry laugh and her encouraging request to be "patient," have been growing weary of waiting. The Sultan has arrived! He has taken a particularly long rest this day, changed the uniform in which he received the Ottoman officials for a simple morning coat, and is seated in an armchair in the big salon waiting the arrival of the ladies in the order which the Hasnadar should see fit to introduce them. A procession of four ladies at a time, headed by the Hasnadar, we enter the room where Mehmeth V. is seated. But it is a ceremony so intimate, so unlike the ceremony we had dimly seen a few hours before through the latticed windows, that I cannot bring myself to think this good-natured, unceremonious old gentleman is the Sultan of a great Empire.

To me, we had the appearance of four students going to an examination, and I felt this more when, after kneeling before the Caliph, as etiquette demands, and kissing his hand, we were requested to rise and be introduced. "Your Majesty, our Sultan, Commander of the Faithful," began the Hasnadar, with bent head, and leaning on her stick of office, "this is the

daughter of —— and the wife of ——" Then the Sovereign Caliph congratulated her on being the daughter of —— and the wife of ——, said he was delighted to make her acquaintance, and passed on to the next lady, who was introduced in the same manner. When Fâtima's name was made known to his Majesty, he asked her to be seated, and, again kneeling before the Sultan, she gave him news of her father, and answered the many questions he asked.

This was the first time Fâtima had made the acquaintance of the Sultan. "He was delighted," he said with Eastern courtesy, and Fâtima rose and asked permission to introduce me herself. I was not introduced as the daughter or wife of a well-known Pasha, but as Fâtima's "English sister," who had come to share her existence for a while, and who had now come with her to pay homage to the Sovereign of the country. Many questions the Sultan asked about me, about my country, and all the while he talked I was thinking of the poor captive, Prince Réchad, who for thirty-three years had been imprisoned within those walls, and who now was the Sultan seated before me. He was weary. Early rising, perhaps, suited him as little as it suited me. He frequently pulled himself up, forced his eyes open, said he was delighted to make our acquaintance. Then we rose, and the Hasnadar escorted us from the room, and on the same occasion four more Court ladies were led into the Imperial presence.

It is interesting naturally to meet the ruler of a country, of an empire of such tradition, of a land which will be for so many years to come the subject of the greatest interest, but the meeting of the present Sultan did not stir me as did the meeting of the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid—Abdul Hamid, who pretended not to know one word of the French language, which he speaks fluently, who always played his part, and took particular care that part should be well played before foreigners. All the nicest-sounding words were chosen from the Turkish language to delight their ears. He humbly requested that the distinguished foreigner for a short while staying within the capital of his "dear" land would make known to him the manner in which the Government could be of service in helping the foreigner on his or her journey. His great, big, brown eagle eyes were wide awake, he *unpacked* the distinguished visitor, whilst the interpreter translated into the language he knows so well, and this hideous tyrant became a being of fascination. The present Sultan is a "fatalist." Could he be otherwise with such an agonizing past? He who was obedient to his brother is now obedient to the Constitution; perhaps for Turkey it is better he should be so.

. . . . .

We drove home in silence, Fâtima and I. She had explained so many things to me that day; now she was tired. A long, tiring, but interest-

ing day it was. I was almost sorry it had to end. Miss Chocolate, in her gaudy attire, is sitting in front of us in the carriage, weeping at the honour conferred on her, for she, with all the other slaves, has kissed the ground on which the master's feet were resting. . . . Cannon are firing to announce that the time for evening prayer has come ; the fat, unexercised horses are ploughing their way up the hill ; the shops, which at 4.30 are pulling down their shutters for the night as we drive by, have had a day of rest. . . . What a wonderful change it is to be a Turkish woman for a while. . . . Surely Fate was kind to me when she crossed my destiny with that of little Fâtima.

CHAPTER V

THE ANGEL OF DEATH

THE Baïram festivities have ended sorrowfully for us. This house, which a few days ago echoed with mirth and laughter, is now silent—as silent as a grave. The whole Konak is as if it were covered with a pall of ice ; the happy faces of the slaves have now an expression of woe ; the long stream of ladies who came to visit us at Baïram have returned to mingle their sorrows with ours—the beloved master of this house is dead. He was spending the winter in Cyprus ; his Baïram telegram said he was in perfect health : but even before the news reached us he was sleeping beside his father in the little cemetery by the sea, buried within twenty-four hours of his death, as is the custom here ; and the grand old man of Turkey was laid to rest like the most humble of the Sultan's subjects.

We Westerners, with our curious ideas of Eastern life, cannot imagine the picturesque, simple, and natural attitude the Turks have towards death. None of the hideous wailing, the rending of garments, sackcloth and ashes (supposed

to be part of the Eastern mourning); none of our Western terrifying preparation for the long last journey; no mourning, no flowers, no funeral cards; it is as if the dear one had gone on a journey to a foreign land, and his family and friends pray for him as if he were still alive. A Turkish burial, however, is impressive in its simplicity. A plain wooden coffin, covered with a Persian shawl, and a fez at its head, is carried on the shoulders of the relatives and friends.

When the dead man's eyes are closed the Hodja is called, and he reads for the comfort of the bereaved ones some verses of the Koran. Then he pauses, and solemnly asks those persons present whether they consider their relative an upright, honourable man—a curious custom, this seems to me; it is almost as if the Hodja were preparing for the dead man a passport for the next world. (I write these words with all reverence.) It is not always, however, that the assembled mourners answer the Hodja's question in the affirmative. If their conscience tells them to speak the truth they do so, and the Hodja answers simply, "Then forgive your brother his sins, as Allah will forgive you," and the assembled mourners pass on to the grave.

To me it has seemed a little strange to see the sons of wealthy Pashas buried as only the poor in our country world be buried. When I questioned a friend about this she answered, "The money you people in the West spend on funeral pomp we

give to the poor assembled round the grave, and according to the deceased's years and fortune. Supposing a rich man of 83 is buried, eighty-three sovereigns would be distributed amongst the poor; when a man of 83 and of moderate means, eighty-three francs, or even eighty-three pence, as the case may be. The poor are never forgotten in this country; they come to the marriage feast, they come to the Baïram festivities, every day they come to this house and are fed, and even during death they are not neglected."

We, the women of the house, do not follow the coffin to the grave. Twice since my short stay here the Angel of Death has visited this house. The Pasha's grandson left us first of all, and now the Pasha himself is "not here," which is my Turkish friend's expression to avoid pronouncing the word "death."

For days now, streams of visitors have come to show their sympathy. The door leading to the *selamlik* has been left open for all the men friends who will to enter, and the door leading to the *haremlik* has been left open for any women who care to enter. But what a curious assembly of visitors! What a lesson in "equality"! Some of the callers were the wives of Ministers of State, some were the wives and daughters of generals, admirals, and the most honoured of Turkey's great men, some were almost beggars, but they were all together in the same room. Death, the great leveller, had brought them together to mourn

the loss of a personal friend, and we of the household were grateful for the sympathy of them all.

According to their custom, the ladies made their *temenahs* (Eastern salutations) to the hostess, which she acknowledged, rising, however, to kiss the hand of the old ladies, some of whom came from long distances to take part in the mourning. They came in bright colours many of these callers, which seemed strange to me, accustomed from my birth to the habit of outward mourning.

When the visitors have taken their seats, they make their *temenahs* to all the assembled guests, and the guests acknowledge their salutations; it is a picturesque manner of saying "How do you do?" When first I arrived here I frequently forgot to acknowledge the *temenahs* of the guests. A veil, after all, does not make a Turkish woman. My thoughts at the time were far away, but the look of surprise at my lack of breeding called me to order, and I pay particular attention now to what are elementary points in good education.

Whilst sipping my coffee, as very few of the ladies speak, or, if they speak, they do so in a whisper, I carefully study the assembled guests. The wife of —— Pasha is wearing a bright blue satin dress and *tcharchaff* (Turkish cape and veil), high-heeled shoes, and open-worked silk stockings; a scarf of ermine is round her neck. At her feet, sitting cross-legged on the floor, is an ex-slave dealer, a woman in a tattered red

tcharchaff. She has left her shoes outside. Near her are a bath attendant and a poor woman, who usually sits nursing her miserable offspring not far from our gate; they sit silently weeping, these women, for the benefactor who is no more, and without uttering one word they rise, politely bow to the assembled guests, put on their shoes, and disappear through the open door of the harem.

Every time coffee is served—and coffee is offered to every visitor—I take a cup; it gives me a better chance of studying the curious scene in which I am playing a part, and the more I look, the more beautiful it seems to me, and it makes me almost sad to think I cannot meet this spirit of democracy in any other land. But the most beautiful part of it all is the absolute "naturalness" of the situation. The rich woman has not the patronizing attitude of the Western woman towards her humbler sisters, the poor woman has not the cringing gratitude of the West for favours received; each knows her part—the woman whose birth and education entitle her to a chair and the woman whose education teaches her, her place is on the floor, and who, even though the high-born woman invites her to sit on a chair, refuses. Each is fulfilling her destiny—each is content with her lot.

I do not swear by everything Turkish, much as I love the Turks. They have their faults;

which nation has not its faults? but, as a woman who has led the life of a Turkish woman, surely I am privileged to point out to the reader the most beautiful features of this life as I see them. We have been unjust to Turkey; we have for so long confounded the Turkish subjects with the cruel despots of the Hamidian régime; we have for so long now condemned wholesale everything Turkish, and the novel-writers of the day describe a Turkey which certainly does not exist to-day.

I have so often explained the meaning of the word harem; the papers have repeated my explanation; but I still receive letters asking the most primitive questions I would be ashamed to repeat to my friends. They who know our history and literature as few in England know it, how would they feel were they to have an idea of what Europe thought of them? How is it possible for a British official, after long residence here, to ask whether we eat with our fingers? How could a man of any intelligence suppose that my host, who has eaten at the Kaiser's table, could come back to his own country and eat with his fingers? One feels inclined to treat the question with the contempt one feels for the questioner, but silence is consent, and one of the reasons why the modern Turk is so misjudged to-day is because he has treated these calumnies with silent contempt.

To the British official I answer, then, we eat

you are so early?" one day his friend asked him; "however early I come, you are always here." "I have two wives," answered the pious man; "I get away as soon as I possibly can."

The Turkish woman is proud, and insists that her dignity be respected, and, personally, I know few who would put up with the "polygamy" which women of the Latin races are obliged to accept. When a Turkish woman marries, her husband is obliged according to his means to make a settlement; this sum becomes hers should she find it necessary to divorce him. So when a wife has cause for complaint she claims her dowry and personal effects, and returns to her family or nearest relative, and both husband and wife are free to marry again.

Marriages can be made and unmade here with a rapidity that would astonish even our Transatlantic cousins. Reform of the marriage and divorce laws is urgently needed, and yet when you come to look at the question carefully, regrettable as this easy divorce is, it is astonishing how few men take advantage of their privilege. In a country where public opinion considers a man's private life belongs exclusively to him, where men and women take their pleasures apart, where men are so frequently obliged to seek the society of European women, and divorce is as easy as saying "Good morning," it seems incredible to me that the Turkish households run

along so smoothly. Perhaps it is that the Turkish wife, feeling her insecure position, takes particular care to please her lord and master; perhaps it is that the Turk is, as a rule, a good husband and father; perhaps it is that he sees in his wife a charm the European does not possess. At any rate, to a foreigner these laws appear as though they were made to lead men into temptation.

Many people have stayed to lunch this week, none of them, of course, invited. Always our table is laid for twelve persons, although sometimes we are only three to lunch. Those who call in the morning stay to lunch as a matter of course; the hostess would feel herself slighted were they to go away without sharing her meal. She it is who is under obligations to her guests for honouring her with their presence.

The two principal meals here, lunch and dinner, are unending, and generally extend to twelve or fifteen courses, quite ten of those courses being vegetables cooked in oil or cooked with the meat, and, the goodness of the meat having given itself to the vegetables, it is not served at table, but is given to the beggars or the endless army of cats which inhabits the basement of a Turkish house. These cats, fortunately, understand their place is downstairs unless they are invited upstairs. Stamboul will soon be as overcrowded with cats, as Pera was with dogs. "Why do you not drown some of them?" I asked a member of

this household. "It would be a sin according to the Koran," said he; "we only kill animals to eat them."

Turkish cooking, delicious though it be, is not the diet for most of the ladies here, and certainly not for me. Cheese *bereks*, of pastry, so thin that they fall in bits before you can get them into your mouth. *Kadaïf*, biscuits soaked in treacle and covered with sugared cream, the breast of chicken ground into a powder and served with cream and chocolate—I feel I need four hours' hard riding to digest properly the dishes the hospitable Turks set before us, and I have scarcely walked five hundred yards in six weeks.

This lack of physical exercise and air is to me one of the most unfortunate features of Turkish life. It is true the windows are open, but the sun shining through the lattice windows does not have a chance of playing its proper part; it can neither warm the house nor kill the microbes. This would not matter so much if the ladies spent more time out of doors, or if, when they are out of doors, they kept their veils up. There is absolutely no reason now why they should not; the police have strict orders from the "feminist" Military Governor of Constantinople to interfere in no way with the ladies, and any man daring to insult a woman is punished with exile.

But the slavery of ages cannot be cast aside in a few months, and the ladies continue to wear

their thick black canvas veils over their faces. Through this veil the beautiful coloured landscape becomes a black-and-white sketch. On hot days it is unbearable; one has a tendency to squint because of looking through the holes in order to see, and it makes one's eyes ache if one suddenly throws it back and comes into the full glare of the sunshine. And yet the Turkish woman still wears her veil down. "You see," said Djémal Bey (the Military Governor of Constantinople), "they will not take advantage of the liberty I try to give them."

And now the men, not the women, curious as it may seem to Western minds, have awakened to the fact that this lack of physical exercise is beginning to show most distressing results in the poor anæmic children born of these mothers who take no exercise. Nowadays, when thinking men no longer accept the decrees of the Church as the supreme verdict, but begin to judge for themselves, progress is possible.

Formerly, when the weaklings died off, the faithful bowed their heads in resignation: Kismet, "it is written," said they. Now the indefatigable Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, who has ordered fifty schools to be opened during the next year, is importing into the country teachers of Swedish drill. I took part the other day in the first lesson given to the girls. How interesting it was to see their wide-awake, wondering eyes, their look of disgust when the

teacher appeared in knickerbockers and unveiled in the presence of the male inspector — they who, though only ten to twelve, had their hair closely veiled. And the mothers who came upon the scene, and with tears in their eyes begged that they might have their children back, for they could not understand what these Western women were doing with them. How strange and curious it all is, this awakening of a people after centuries of sleep!

In this work of regeneration, again, we have not given the Turks either the praise or justice they deserve. It is when one is behind the scenes, and sees the difficulties the Turks have to contend with that one can appreciate their efforts. It is true they have made mistakes; youth and inexperience always make mistakes—that is the natural order of things. It would certainly have been better for Turkey to have made more mistakes and had the advantage of the lesson those mistakes bring than to have relied on Europe for assistance. The duty of Europe should have been to help the Turks to help themselves, instead of which all along the line they have stepped in and taken the bread from their mouths.

Here are these Turks struggling against the tyranny of a religion which is not the religion of Mahomet; they are striving for a more intelligent interpretation of the Koran, especially on the subject of women and the veil. The all-powerful

Sheik-ul-Islam, whose followers are principally amongst the turban-headed men in Asia Minor interferes with progress, as the Church always does when Church and State are combined. When Djemil Pasha, the Prefect of Constantinople, opened a beautiful park in Stamboul, and gave men and women permission to walk in that park at the same time, the Sheik-ul-Islam issued a decree forbidding the women to walk in this park the same day as the men. Then Talaat Bey, with a boldness yet unknown in Islam, issued a decree ignoring the Sheik-ul-Islam, and gave women and men permission to walk in the park on the same days.

All these reforms are going on in what Europe considers an almost bankrupt State. Education, new roads, industries, a new navy—everything is needed ; but Turkey will pull herself together if only she has confidence in herself.

CHAPTER VI

CHAMPIONS OF WOMEN—THE MEN WHO LEAD

I HAVE been to one of the Turkish feminist meetings, which take place every Friday afternoon upon which it is possible to find speakers. This society is not organized according to our Western methods, there being no responsible head and no list of members. It has not even a battle-cry, as, for example, "the vote," nor an official name; it is the society where the different interests of women are discussed, and its best appellation, perhaps, would be "the society for the elevation of womanhood." From articles which have from time to time appeared in our papers I imagined there was in Turkey an organized society for the abolition of the veil, and that "man," the arch-enemy of woman, was the chief obstacle to woman's progress. I believe, however, this idea is prevalent in our Western countries.

Signed always with the name of a Turkish woman, these articles are written by persons who are catering for readers of sensation. The names

of the writers are unknown here amongst the feminists, the statements most emphatically denied ; it is not to the women's advantage to be described as these articles describe them—beautiful, idle creatures airing their grievances to the women of the West. A Turkish woman never airs her grievances, most certainly not to foreigners, and those who come into intimate contact with her know she resents being asked questions, and she does not ask to be pitied.

I have pointed out in previous chapters that for the present the Turkish woman's aim is not to cast aside the veil, and also the fact which is still almost incomprehensible to me, viz. the encouragement the men are giving to the women in their work. It is they who are trying to give the women courage ; they who are urging the women to be a little bolder in their tactics, and who, in their writings and speeches, are imploring them to leave no stone unturned to hasten their enfranchisement. I am told that the men have even written articles for the newly founded woman's paper, and signed them with feminine names, for the number of women writers here is still very limited. The cultured women, it is true, speak Turkish, but as their education has been given by French or English governesses, the study of their own language has been neglected, and at present they can best express themselves in a language not their own.

My friends speak and write to one another

in French; hence, when Fâtima and I walk, which is very rarely, and speak to one another in French, no one supposes that one of these veiled figures is an Englishwoman. It seems almost to a stranger that French is the language of the country, and Turkish is for the poor and uneducated, although the members of the new Nationalist movement would not be happy to hear this. They are, however, setting themselves to the task of learning their own language, which they have neglected, and many are doing so with a view to writing. Halidé-Hanoum, the most talented of Turkish writers, began the study of her own language after she was twenty, and another Turkish lady, who spent a year in London when her husband was attached to the Ottoman Embassy, is working day and night at Turkish in order to write.

The hall in which the feminist meeting was held was the large lecture hall of the university, lent by the men. Men were the stewards, and all four speakers were men. Strange and chivalrous as it seemed to me to see the men conducting the women's meeting, I was, however, disappointed not to hear a woman speak. I had so often heard of Halidé-Hanoum's talent as a speaker, and I particularly wanted to compare her gestures, her delivery, and her subject-matter with the women speakers of my own country. Halidé-Hanoum is the mother of two children. Up till a month ago she taught history, pedagogy, and literature at the Normal School for Girls. She has written five or

six volumes of importance, as well as articles on special subjects, and frequently she addresses the Friday afternoon meetings. But in all her work she tells me, she has been encouraged by the opposite sex, and no one ever questions whether, since she gives so much time to public work, her children and home are neglected, as is generally the case with us.

Long before the meeting began the big hall was crowded with veiled women, a few of whom never raised their face veils during the whole three hours' meeting. The hall, from the entrance, appeared as if it were filled with nuns, for even those who had their veils thrown back carefully covered their hair. I was seated in the middle of the hall, with the Turkish woman who recently studied at Bedford College on my left, to translate for me, and my friend on my right, also to translate if she felt inclined.

The first person whom the chairman called upon to address us was a poet. Being unable to understand more than the titles and the ideas of the poems, I listened to the rhythmic language and watched the interested faces of the listeners. This poet, my friend explained to me, was a prominent member of the society, or rather, shall we call it the movement of "Turkey for the Turks"? One of the objects of this movement is to purify the language, to use exclusively Turkish words instead of a mixture of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, which takes away from the strength of the

language and makes the study of Turkish so difficult even for the Turks. We Westerners forget that, besides French and English, and perhaps German, cultured Turks must learn three Oriental languages.

Another object of this Nationalist movement is to encourage the translation of the Koran into Turkish. The Koran has never been completely translated into Turkish; commentaries only have been made, many of which have lost the spirit of the Prophet's meaning. When once the Koran is translated, when once the people can read, think, and interpret for themselves the meaning of the Prophet, then really will serious progress begin.

I have been studying with a friend the verses in the Koran concerning women. "Women must have similar rights to men," says the Koran. "Women are the twin halves of men—the rights of women are sacred. The best of men are those who are best to their wives. To acquire knowledge is an equal duty of man and woman. Woman is the sovereign in the house of her husband." "Whosoever doeth the things that are right, whether male or female, they shall enter Paradise." This is all so strange to me, I who have heard, ever since I can remember, that Mahomet denied woman even a soul, and she could not go to Heaven unless her husband cared to take her there.

We read, too, the verses on veiling. "Maho-

met," my friend explained to me, "knowing the jealous temperament of the Arab, considered it wiser for *married* women to veil their hair, but he did not say all women were to be veiled, that is an amendment tacked on by his followers, and it is they, and not the Prophet, who are responsible for this useless bondage."

I have discussed with many enlightened Turkish women this question of the veil. Is it a protection or is it not? Halidé-Hanoum considers it creates between the sexes a barrier which is impossible when both sexes should be working for the common cause of humanity. It makes the woman at once "the forbidden fruit," and surrounds her with an atmosphere of mystery which, although fascinating, is neither desirable nor healthy. The thicker the veil the harder the male stares. The more the woman covers her face the more he longs to see the features which, were he to see but once, would interest him no more.

Personally I find the veil no protection. In my hat I thread my way in and out of the cosmopolitan throng at Pera. No one speaks to me, no one notices me, and yet my mirror shows I am no more ugly than the majority of my sex. But when I have walked in the park, a veiled woman, what a different experience. Even the cold Englishman has summed up courage and enough Turkish to pay compliments to our "silhouettes." We have not heeded them, walking as real Turkish

women, with stooped backs and bent heads and a rather swinging gait, but these two silent figures only served to excite their curiosity, and no doubt they wondered at my thick veil. . . .

Another reason for condemning the veil is that it dispenses women from taking the responsibility of their actions. Should they desire to stray away from the path of virtue, who can control the actions of these black-robed, veiled women? During the reign of Abdul Hamid they helped most considerably in bringing about the Revolution, for it was they who went from house to house carrying the letters, as the men never could have dared to do. It was the women who were responsible for nominations being cancelled and for many important appointments, and even I have seen before now veiled women pleading the cause of their mankind at the feet of a Grand Vizier's daughter. Turkish men and women now, however, have both declared that an anonymous power is a danger to the State, and yet who is to be the first woman to leave off her veil?

But to return to the speakers at the meeting. The poems, in beautiful sounding language, were an appeal to the women to save the Fatherland, and again and again I recognized that sacred word. The poet, with a woeful face, outstretched arms, and tearful voice, pleaded till most of us had melted into tears. This recent war had touched all those women so closely, most of them had lost some loved ones during the

war, many of them had nursed those who were wounded and had fallen victims to cholera, but always the word Fatherland brought home to them the terrible fact that half the Fatherland was no longer theirs.

The next speaker was more philosophical and scientific. We dried our eyes and listened. He was explaining to us the value of our sex from a scientific point of view, and he tried to show the impossibility of one sex raising itself without the assistance of the other. "Am I really in Turkey?" I frequently asked myself, as the principal points of the speaker's utterances were translated to me. It is as if sometimes when I think of my home away yonder and my fellow-women workers that I am standing on my head. "We are at the Antipodes, we English and Turks," a Pasha once said to me. Indeed, he was right. Was there ever, I wonder, in my country a feminist meeting conducted only by men and where the men urged the women to rebel and strike for freedom? . . .

The third speaker had been in England, and prefaced his plea of "Turkey for the Turks" by relating some of his experiences in our capital. "On one occasion," said he, "I had been invited to listen to music performed by petticoated soldiers. But it was more horrible than anything I ever heard. Our Kurds would have been ashamed of such a performance!" On another occasion he visited a school; the teacher

asked the assembled boys to guess the speaker's nationality. Unable to guess, they had to be told he was a Turk. "And then," said the speaker, "the little boys uttered a cry of alarm." "Why are you frightened?" asked the teacher. "Turks eat little boys," was their reply. The speaker was not at all enthusiastic about my country; he felt so hurt at being asked the usual questions about the harem life, and how many wives he had, that he finally refused, he said, to converse with such ignorant people. He spoke, too, of the grinding poverty of the East End of our capital. "How dare that nation criticize us," he added, "when within the gates of their own city people are living in a manner unworthy of a civilized nation." He was right, this speaker, much as I wish he could have left unsaid what he had, alas! seen.

From afar we appear to the foreigner so great and magnificent, but when once they have stayed in our capital, and seen for themselves the degradation of our people, there is always a blot on the picture, and England is never for them the England they had dreamt of and wished to see. The object of this speech was naturally to prove the futility of any longer admiring a people who took no pains to hide how little they respected the Turks. "We must learn to help ourselves. God helps those who help themselves," was his concluding remark. These Young Turks have certainly begun to learn the wisdom of action.

The last speech, however, was the speech which stirred the women most. How I wish it had been possible to read it afterwards in French, for my neighbours, after two and a half hours' constant translating for me, began to grow just a little weary, and I could see they wished to listen to every word. The speaker had no notes, but he spoke with eloquence and a passion I have never yet seen in a man pleading a cause not his own. His subject was "The veil and the subjection of women." He condemned it from a moral point of view, and he condemned it from a physical point of view, and showed how, in spite of the custom which has been accepted now for centuries, veiling is against the teaching of the Koran. "Our Prophet," said he, "considered ignorance a sin. What has been done to help you out of ignorance?"

A woman, according to the Koran, may preach in a mosque, and may exercise any profession she chooses. How have you taken advantage of these privileges? Then he blamed the woman. "Can you not feel your bondage?" he asked. "Who can give you freedom unless you yourselves ask for freedom? What right have the interpreters to bind and fetter and degrade women? I am not against religion; it would be disastrous for Turkey to-day if there were no religion; but what I demand, and what every thinking man and woman should demand to-day, is a reformed religion, a seeking after the truth, the

real meaning of the Prophet's teaching." A storm of applause greeted these words. My friend translated. I watched the women with their veils down over their face. Surely, after such a speech they would throw them back.

I, the foreigner, was stirred; it seemed to me that after such a speech I would be capable of any action to be free . . . there sat the women, a handkerchief occasionally poked behind the thick veil, to wipe away their tears, but never once were their veils lifted. How well he had spoken! How necessary, indeed, in this country is a reformed religion! How extraordinary it is that everywhere the Church is the chief opponent to most reforms! Has the Christian Church given to woman the place that Christ intended her to have? How has the Church helped the women of my country in their fight for freedom? A little mild assistance when the heavy spade work is done, perhaps, is better than no assistance at all. . . .

Unfortunately for the women here, the theatre at present is too primitive to be of any practical assistance. I do not mean, of course, the poor French companies which visit Pera almost weekly, but the little native theatres to be found right in the heart of Stamboul, and which my friends have visited since I have been staying with them. Whatever piece is played at these little theatres becomes ridiculous by the mere fact that when an Armenian cannot be found to play the part of

a Turkish woman, a man has to supply that need, and that in itself turns any play into a farce. It is not easy either to find an Armenian to play the part of a young Turkish girl. Her accent is not pleasant, so I am told; her voice exceedingly disagreeable; and I personally saw a woman whom no theatrical manager would have accepted in my country, except for the rôle of a stout, elderly matron, playing the part of a coy maiden of fifteen.

This, of course, made the piece worthless except as an amusement, and a form of amusement a trifle too primitive for thinking women to-day. "How can I convince these people?" one day a Turk asked me. "Have you ever tried the theatre?" I asked in reply. "In our Western countries it is from the stage that most of our important messages are given to the world—the stage has been magnificent in the cause of women."

But to return once more to the meeting. "Can you not see for yourselves," went on the speaker, "that although it is our duty to protect our women, it is detrimental to their very best interests to keep them shielded from every gust of wind? What use are these hot-house flowers in the garden of life? Virtue cannot be purchased by slavery. Are you going to cut out your children's tongues to prevent their telling lies?" Again a storm of applause gave my neighbour a chance of translating for me. Then the meeting

ended. How magnificently he had spoken! After such a speech one would have expected these women to have walked out without their veils . . . but they are still afraid.

To ask a Turkish woman to go out without her veil is almost like asking an Englishwoman to go out without a blouse. Living in a Turkish household one sees this slavery has become almost part of a woman's existence. I have heard of women face to face with death, women saved from a burning house, covering their hair with a veil—the height of imprudence. The other day at luncheon a poetess of about fifty was at the table. In the midst of a most interesting discussion on modern Turkish literature, she screamed, and holding her serviette between her face and the open door, called for a veil. She had heard the young Bey's spurs coming towards the open door of the dining-room. "Don't come in!" called my hostess to her husband, and at last I understood what was happening.

I was wearing a Broussa silk scarf round my shoulders; I lent it to her; she covered up all her hair and tied it round her neck; then the young Bey came in to lunch. And yet this was not an ignorant woman! On the contrary, she was a woman of great intelligence, but she, like so many others, will not countenance any attempt to modify the veil.

And what about the other women? Halidé-

Hanoum, who tells me "the veil surrounds the woman with an unhealthy air of mystery"—how does she appear in the street? A thick veil over her face, which she never throws back. I asked her one day the reason why she kept herself so closely veiled. "It is a habit," she answered. Another feminist told me of her great admiration for the British militant Suffragettes. "If only we Turkish women could get some of that fine spirit," she said; and a little while later she told me of an adventure she had had a few days before. It was towards five o'clock, an insolent Turk had pulled her sleeve and pinched her arm. She was defending herself with her umbrella, when the policeman came to her assistance. "And what happened?" I asked, for she stopped short in her narrative. "I am ashamed to say," she answered, "I ran away. If I had stopped to give evidence the man would have been exiled." "And what an advertisement for your cause," I added. "Yes," said she, "but I had not the courage to face the scandal!"

As I have said before, it is not for me to criticize the methods of the women of a civilization so totally different from our own. The men are urging them to take their freedom, and helping them all they can, but if they will be free they themselves must strike the blow. The women of another civilization cannot help them except by giving them the benefit of education whenever they ask for it. An enterprising Turkish woman came a

year ago to Bedford College to study. Her year in England will mean more to her than anything that could have been offered to her. She may not have learnt from us as much book knowledge as the French could have taught her, but she took away with her a moral background which is of more value than mere knowledge. I have seen this woman giving her lessons. I have seen her when her weekday lessons are ended spending her Friday (the Turkish day of rest) giving lessons to the women of the poor classes. Some of these women are between fifty and sixty, some are younger, but it is one of the most pathetic sights I have yet seen here to see these old ladies spelling out their words like little children, and with bent backs applying themselves to the task of learning to write as if their very existence depended on it.

When once women can be seriously interested in a cause they are splendid. In Turkey, in spite of their veil, in spite of their apparent desire not to take advantage of the privileges offered them, they have shown themselves magnificent in two most important branches—nursing and teaching. In both these branches the Turkish woman has shown qualities Europe never supposed she possessed—she is a true patriot.

CHAPTER VII

PASSIONATE WOMEN PATRIOTS—A MASS MEETING

THIS is the anniversary of the foundation of the Ottoman Empire—a red-letter day for Turkish feminists. To-day for the first time the various women's societies have held a mass meeting, and a member from each society has given an account of the year's work. This meeting, then, marks the end of the old régime for the Turkish woman. She has now given us, as it were, chapter and verse as to the rôle she intends to play in the future. She has cast aside the dangerous rôle she played until quite recently —a powerful part, and all the more powerful since it was anonymous. When anything went wrong with the political pie into which so many of them had put their fingers—it was not a case of "cherchez la femme," for she disappeared behind the veil, and the men least of all suspected how well these women could ruin a cause if only they chose. Turkish women, then, are sacrificing a powerful anonymous rôle for an honest responsible part in the work of the world, and recognizing

that only by straightforward, honest methods can they advance the welfare of humanity. And so the Turkish women who declared themselves perfectly satisfied with their bondage, and yet at the same time worked in secret to break those chains, have now come out in the manner of the Western women, openly to demand their rights.

But it is unjust to give all the credit of this meeting to the women. How different would have been their position now had they had a Government against them! I am not going to put halos round the heads of the Young Turks, nor am I going to present them with a pair of angel's wings; such vain flattery would be as useless as it is bad form. The Young Turk, however, has not yet had his opportunity. Youth and inexperience are responsible for many strange blunders—effort is so new a chapter in the life-story of Turkey; effort and blunders beget experience, and experience he must have at all costs. In his political methods he has not been impeccable. I do not defend him. What I do protest against, however, is that an action committed by a Turk should be called "a crime," and yet committed by a Christian neighbour "a diplomatic error." And so in this question of women. "See," says Europe, "how the Turk treats his women." "See," I might answer, "how the British Government treats its women."

There are so many questions which should be entirely settled by women and never taken to the

Imperial Parliament at all. The Turkish Government has been wiser than we in this matter, for it recognizes that education and the housing of the poor are questions which should be left as much as possible in the women's hands.

A Turkish Feminist Government! To Western Europe this sounds strange. We have heard for so long of the Paradise of Mahomet, where women have no place, and of a religion which does not credit them even with the possession of a soul. Exactly how these ideas originated no one has been able to tell me—perhaps in the imagination of Hood, for the Koran distinctly states that "Paradise is at the mother's feet." A Turkish Feminist Government! Have the women quite become accustomed to the idea? It is true they never before possessed such privileges. One of the first triumphs of the counter-revolution of April 13 was the total destruction of the woman's club founded by Selma Hanoum, sister of Ahmed Riza Bey, and that lady nearly lost her life as her reward for having espoused the cause of the liberty of her Turkish sisters.

This meeting, which celebrated the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, was under the patronage of Djémal Pasha, now General Pasha and Minister of Public Works, to whom I have so often referred as the Military Governor of Constantinople. When congratulating him on his new appointment, I asked him if, in his new capacity, he would still be the "feminist" Minister. "Most

certainly," said he ; " this whole Eastern question, is it not a woman's question ? "

He it was who gave women the opportunity of visiting the warship *Hamidieh* ; he who allowed a Turkish woman, Belkis Chefket Hanoum, to go up in an aeroplane, and then had her portrait placed in the Military Museum beside the heroes of Turkey ; he it was who had the State Treasury and old Serail opened for the first time for Turkish women. They have now sold at a charity bazaar ; they are organizing a concert, at which they will be allowed to perform. It seems hardly comprehensible to Western readers that these favours should be a question to be decided by a Government, or that such elementary every-day occurrences should be counted as steps towards freedom ; they should have been in Constantinople under the régime of Hamid, then they could take these " reforms " at their proper value.

Every place in the theatre where the meeting was held was crowded long before the time announced for its starting. There were no men in the audience, but men took part in the proceedings and made brilliant feminist speeches. The whole aspect of the audience was so different from anything I had seen in the West—the black-robed and veiled women, some puffing away contentedly at their cigarettes, others walking up and down to soothe their restless babies. Babies at a meeting such as this astonished me. I made the remark to my friend. They were not the

women of the "mothers' meeting" class, as many would have supposed judging according to our Western habits, but simply mothers who were interested in the welfare of the country, and curious to hear what was being done for the uplifting of their sex, but who at the same time could not make up their minds to leave "the baby at home." It was a curious conflict between the woman of the old and new civilizations, which, although so natural to my Turkish colleagues, interested me more even than the accounts given by the various societies of the work done.

It is unfortunate not to be able to understand the language of the country one is visiting—this was the first time I had ever heard Turkish women speak in public, and I had to rely on the assistance of an interpreter. They all seemed to speak, however, without difficulty, quite simply, with few gestures, no notes, and perfect calmness until they came to the sacred word, "fatherland" —then there were tears in their voice as well as in their eyes.

How magnificent is this patriotism of the women! There is a strong movement of patriotism amongst the men, but nothing to be compared with that wonderful "Joan of Arc"-ism which is going on amongst the women. With the men it is a mourning for their lost honour, a desire for revenge. On coming out of the military college at Broussa I saw each boy pause before an image, which I from the distance mis-

took for the "Sacred Heart." How had this "Sacred Heart" come into a Moslem college, I wondered; but on closer inspection I found it to be the heart of the fatherland, pierced and bleeding, and above it the map of the Ottoman Empire, with its lost provinces covered in black crêpe. Each boy, I repeat, paused, his brow clouded, his chin was set firm, and then he placed in the collecting-box his "mite" for the national defence.

With the women the patriotism has the same foundation of giving to a cause (far, far more than they can afford they have given to the fund), but a woman's patriotism is more complete than that of a man—there is in it a mixture of fine religious feeling, a pious cult for traditions and responsibility as mothers of the race. Woman is the destiny of man, and the Turkish woman, because of her lack of education and her cloistered condition, has been unable to give to the country the men it needed. All this was explained in the speeches. All her shortcomings the Turkish woman recognizes—this is the beginning of her salvation.

Another feature of this meeting which interested and surprised me was to see how cleverly the Turkish woman is able to raise money and how willingly her sisters respond to her appeal.

The seats for the meeting were from five francs downwards, the entrance money being devoted to the upkeep of a school for girls that women have

recently opened. They are responsible for the expenses of the school. During the afternoon "Alexandra roses" were sold in the same manner in which they are sold in my country for the benefit of the poor refugees, by whom they are made, and finally, after the principal speeches, a collection was taken in the real "Pankhurst" style for the national defence. I might almost have been back in London hearing the "militant" speakers pleading for funds for the "war chest."

"The nation must have a fleet, its very existence depends on its fleet, and the women must help," began the speaker. "I trust the women to give whatever they can." There was a moment's silence, a thrill went through the audience. What was coming? One of the charms of Turkish life is that you never know what will happen. Anything may happen, and generally that which is least expected. There was another pause. All eyes were fixed on the stage, for coming through the wings appeared a Turkish woman, wearing the white sash of the Navy League, and carrying in her arms what I supposed to be a baby in long clothes. Slowly and reverently she began to take off its silk wrappers, reverently she handed it to the chairman—it was not a baby at all, but a magnificent head of woman's hair sent with these words, "This is all I can give towards the Turkish fleet."

As a rule Turkish women have very beautiful hair. Mahomet regarded a woman's hair as her "crowning glory," and it was for this reason he considered it wiser for married women's hair to be veiled; it is not a woman's face, but her hair the fanatics insist on having covered, and, as I have already explained, it is almost indecent to appear before a man with one's hair unveiled. One day I had strayed through the selamlik, and had gone bareheaded to the door. An employee had arrived at the door at the same time, and seeing me turned his head discreetly away until I had time to pull my *écharpe* over my hair. Hair, then, having this value attached to it, this extraordinary contribution towards the Turkish navy had a special meaning for the Turkish women. And the giver? Was she married? If so, her gift was of even greater value, since physical charm is the Turkish woman's dowry. Was she the wife, sister, or daughter of a Turkish officer? She preferred to remain anonymous with true Turkish modesty, and £80 was raised for the fund from the sale of her hair.

Dear little patriot! Every time I see in the papers the Turks have bought a new ship I shall think of her. Those ships to me have now taken a form different from mere ships, for have I not seen them purchased with the price of a woman's hair, the widow's mite, and the orphan's halfpence? But not only a woman's hair—

jewels, embroideries, stuffs were sold for the ships that were to "guarantee the very existence of the fatherland." Most women were weeping. Who could help it when mothers with bowed heads and broken hearts came forward with offerings such as this: "£5 I give to the National Defence in memory of my five sons fallen for the fatherland"?

And so the moments I am spending in Turkey in the charming intimacy of my Turkish sisters are at bottom moments of sadness. Only five years ago I saw this people strike for freedom and shout with joy at the proclamation of the Constitution; now after only five years they are in the deepest mourning. It is not in a fashionable hotel at Pera that one can understand the real meaning of the war. Never shall I forget the spectacle of a long procession of soldiers crossing the Galata Bridge. Medical science had done its best for these men, snatched almost, as it were, from the jaws of death. Of what use were they in life? One person more to feed, and an eyesore to their nearest and dearest, one really begins to wonder if the old Chinese method of hacking the enemy to pieces is not, after all, the most merciful. There were men without legs; some without hands and arms; some blind; but these were nothing compared to the hideously disfigured faces of many, and some of those earless or eyeless victims of the "Christian" Bulgars. No words can describe their pitiful condition—these men

had been mutilated for their fatherland, a glorious destiny indeed. Should we not rejoice? At the sight of them I was physically ill.

But there is another side to the question. These men, many of them, were the bread-winners. Who is going to feed the women now? Now is the time to blame the harem system. The idle, protected women, what are they going to do now? In other countries women of this class could cook or sew or clean. I would have been glad of some one to sew for me besides Miss Chocolate, but in all Stamboul, amongst all these starving women, I can find no woman to do plain sewing. It is not when women are actually starving that one can teach them a trade; they must work at once. They can embroider; they can produce embroidery that is worth leaving to one's grandchildren, and yet a European child of ten would be ashamed to make button-holes as they do.

And this priceless embroidery is less well paid than plain needlework in my country. The Red Crescent Society undertakes to pay one franc a day to these poor women who embroider and weave, and also to find work for the poor refugees who have come back penniless to their native land rather than lose their nationality. It is sad to see these poor creatures arriving. I have been with the women of the Red Crescent Society to meet them at the boats or outside the mosques, where they sit and wait, whilst their husbands

try to get work. They look perfectly resigned, these poor women, as they sit huddled up beside the carpets and the cats, kept in bird-cages. Those who have no baby to nurse sit with their elbows on their knees and their heads on their hands. They can only wait their fate. But the Red Crescent ladies are there; they will not starve.

I had no idea before coming here of the splendid self-sacrifice these women are making for these starving souls. They have formed a league and have undertaken to buy only the stuffs of their own country, and have opened a shop in Stamboul where only Turkish goods are sold. No more Paris dresses, no more jewels; not one luxury till these poor, starving women are fed, and if you ask a Turkish woman to-day what is her greatest ambition, she will answer without hesitation, "To save my poor country."

I have no space in this book to write of the other works started by women, but the Red Crescent, which is organized on the lines of the Red Cross Society (and has the embroidery and weaving establishment in addition), and the movement for the education of the women are, to my mind, the most important of all. It is when one sees these women themselves fettered by atavism, crippled for want of education and a misunderstood teaching of the Koran, fighting against the terrible odds of having to find work for

women who cannot work, and food for hungry mouths in a country where there is no money, that one understands how bitterly these women resent the manner in which they are introduced by the writer's imagination to the Western world.

I very much doubt whether, in the West, we could have fought this terrible fight against poverty as the Turkish women have done. It is infinitely comforting, however, to think, as I sink at nights into my comfortable cushions, that although the wind is howling and the rain is beating against the windows of this konak, any beggar may come in and find food and shelter in the basement. "Find me one of your Western countries," said one day to me Zeyneb (Pierre Loti's disenchanted heroine, to whom everything Western now is tarnished by a lack of Christian charity), "where the poor are accommodated in the houses of the rich; and if they were," she added, "you would have to employ a detective to watch them."

CHAPTER VIII

A TURKISH MOTHER

I HAVE been this afternoon with Fâtima buying "birth" presents. In a Moslem house it is difficult to find a more appropriate name for these presents, which correspond to our christening presents. These "birth" presents, however, were not only for a little new arrival in this world, but for the dear friend to whom this little life was to be entrusted.

This custom of honouring the mother as well as the child, insignificant though it may seem, is only one of the few ways in which homage is paid to the mother in the East. Here all maternity is respected. Not only the married mother, but the unmarried mother, is respected, so that the woman who is left with the "child of her shame" to do the best she can for it and herself does not exist yet in Turkey. It is true the Turks do not consider their women "responsible" for either their good or bad conduct, however much freedom Islam gives them. In this, as in most things, we and the Turks are at the Antipodes. According to the Moslem

law, a woman has absolute control of her own fortune; she can exercise any profession she likes; but when it is a question of a misdeed—theft, for example—the husband is responsible. I do not defend the Turkish system—nor do I defend ours, and the Turkish women themselves now recognize they must be accounted responsible for their good and their bad deeds.

To understand the importance given to maternity, one must have lived for a while in the East. Mahomet placed maternity above everything else when he said "Paradise was at the mother's feet." In the highest circles and in the poor man's house the mother rules. As cadines (wives) the Sultan's legitimate wives do not count socially, yet if the son of one of them becomes Sultan, she then is the highest lady in the land—the Validé-Sultana, to whom all petitions from the women to the Imperial Master must be addressed. She is the head of the Ottoman Court, the only woman before whom the Sultan kneels.

And so in private life, the relations between mother and son are not the same as with us. There are always reverence and respect for her as well as love. She is not the "old mater," nor would he allow her to wait on him. However great a scoundrel a man may be, however deep his hands may be steeped in blood, he will rise when his mother comes into the room, kiss her hand, then raise it to his forehead as a sign

of great respect, and inquire for the health of Annajim (my dear mother), and give her the seat of honour.

In the homes of the people, in the two-roomed cabins in Asia Minor, and where they still eat out of one dish, helping themselves with their fingers, the son will only take his share when he is sure his mother has taken a substantial helping. The law of Islam obliges a man to keep his mother, and his wife accepts this as a matter of course.

A young Turkish woman who marries and has her own establishment, as with us, is the exception rather than the rule, and, personally, amongst all the women with whom I am acquainted, I know no one who does not live either with her husband's or her own parents. Some parents make the stipulation before consenting to their daughter's marriage that she shall still live with them, and I have met some parents who have refused good marriages for their daughters simply because they could not allow them to leave their home. The Turkish mother urges her son to marry as soon as possible. He marries before he can even keep himself. His family sees nothing extraordinary in the fact that they have not only to keep him, but his wife and family.

"And the mother-in-law?" one naturally asks. The relationship between a Turkish mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law is quite different from the relationship existing in the West. My hostess and her mother-in-law remind me not a little of

Ruth and Naomi. The daughter-in-law treats her husband's mother just as she would treat her own mother, *i.e.* she has the same position towards her mother-in-law that she had towards her own mother before marriage. It is the mother-in-law who is the head of the house, the mother-in-law who sits in the place of honour, the mother-in-law who is first greeted, the mother-in-law who gives permission to do such and such a thing, and who is called by her daughter-in-law Hanoum Effendi (honoured lady).

My friend cannot understand how difficult it would be for a daughter-in-law in England to live with her husband's mother, nor can she understand the tactless Western woman who expects a mother-in-law, her superior in age and experience, to give over the household to her son's wife. "My turn will come, alas! only too soon," one lady said, "when I become a mother-in-law, then I expect my daughter-in-law to treat me as I have treated my husband's mother—to love and respect me, and not to make of me a subject of ridicule." I must say it is difficult to think of the sweet-faced woman who sits at the head of our table as a mother-in-law in the Western sense of the word. She effaces herself with exquisite tact; absents herself when she thinks her presence unnecessary—for example, at our harem tea parties; gives advice only when it is asked; and is always ready to show how grateful she is to have gained a daughter and not lost her son.

It is curious and astonishing to see this woman of another generation not understanding in the least her daughter-in-law's civilization and culture and yet accepting it as perfectly all right. After the midday meal her prayer carpet is taken out of the cupboard and laid for her on the floor of her room, her shoes are removed, she performs her ablutions, veils her hair, and prays in the picturesque manner of the East. She obeys the teaching of Mahomet in the letter and not in the spirit, yet if it enters her head to wonder why her daughter-in-law performs none of the prescribed religious duties she never makes a remark.

When the young Bey's brother officers dine with us she absents herself from the table, for although nothing would induce her to be present, she sees no reason for her daughter-in-law not presiding at the table. Is it, I wonder, a broad mind which understands without understanding, or is it a supreme trust in her son, that he will only allow his wife to do those things which are right, or is it fatalism, a resignation to put up with what you cannot change? At any rate, the smooth working of a ménage of women of totally different centuries, the possibility of their living together in perfect peace and affection, shows there must be sacrifice on both sides, and a tact and diplomacy, which we do not possess.

It might be argued, the Turkish bride is of the mother-in-law's choosing. Generally yes, but not always. In a marriage *à la Turque* the bride-

groom takes on trust her whom his mother chooses for him. He is usually content with the choice, or, if he is not, he accepts her as his written fate and makes the best of the situation. But since the Turkish man has become accustomed to Western civilization he no longer will marry *à la Turque*, and since the customs of the country do not allow a man to see and speak with the woman he is to marry, many of them prefer to marry a European.

A Turk recently told me you could not expect thinking Turkish men to make a real Turkish marriage. He does not want a plaything—he wants a companion, and Europe affords him the possibility of at least knowing the woman he is to marry. To me it seems a dangerous and unsatisfactory way of solving the woman question. Turks who have acted otherwise have in general linked their existences with that of not the best class of European society, to put it rather mildly. In fact, so serious did it become that a short while ago the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs issued an order forbidding Turkish diplomatists to marry without the consent of their Government. Truly a wise measure. All details are required by the Turkish Government of the young lady's Embassy, and marriage without the Government's consent means dismissal from the service.

When the Turkish woman has a foreign daughter-in-law, the ménage does not always run

on smooth lines. The European is unable to adapt herself to her new surroundings, she does not take the trouble to understand the working of an entirely new civilization. . . . I have in these cases, however, always admired the forbearance and tact of the Turkish woman.

The modern Turkish woman demands the privilege of talking with her future husband before her fate is signed and sealed. She does not have the opportunity of knowing him as we Englishwomen know our future husbands, but she can at least know whether he will "get on her nerves," in which case she refuses to marry him. Judging, however, as she still does, by instinct, she generally chooses at least a man whom she can respect and a man whose physical appearance pleases her. Many women, however, have owned to me that they accepted their husbands not with any feeling of gratitude or delight, but rather with one of profound thankfulness they were no worse.

Most emphatically I disapprove of marriages between men of the East and women of the West, not because I do not think Turkish men good husbands and fathers, not because I do not consider them honest, upright men, but because I always see in one of these unions, if not disaster for the young couple themselves, at least disenchantment for the children of these unions.

When discussing this subject seriously with a

Turkish man who honoured me by asking my advice about his proposed marriage with a foreign lady, he confessed he preferred to marry a Mohammedan lady, but the "veil" placed too many obstacles in the way of his enjoying her companionship. "Why not marry a Turkish woman and give her her freedom?" "No," he answered, "the women must go slowly; I shall be in my grave before they are free."

If ever Turkish women wanted an argument in favour of a strong militant movement, they have it in the colossal egoism of men like these. Had she the courage to break her fetters, then he would honour her with his protection, but since she has not, the foreigner, often the Turkish woman's social inferior, becomes his life companion. The law of Islam, at least a bad interpretation of the law of Islam, refuses to allow a Turkish woman to marry any but a Mohammedan, whereas a Moslem man may marry a Christian woman; the woman now understands the slight this is to her sex and intelligence.

Since Turkish women cannot retaliate, then, by marrying a man of the West, how are they to accept the challenge other than by fighting for freedom?

I have so often sighed here for the daring of some of my countrywomen, inconsistent as it may seem. What these women need is a strong woman at their head—a strong, responsible woman, with a definite programme, and able

to gain the confidence of her sex. It is the circumstances which make the hero or heroine. "I am such an one as my age requireth," says the Book of Judith. It was the Hamidian régime which made Enver Pasha—there will come, most surely, a woman leader, and that moment may not be far off.

With a feeling of thankfulness that her husband is no worse, the Turkish woman (there are exceptions, of course) naturally stakes everything on maternity. That there should be women in the West who actually refuse to have children is incomprehensible to my friends, and that there are women who for the sake of their figures give their children to strangers to nurse is almost as incomprehensible.

"What have we Eastern women in common with you women of the West — not even the heart," said one day a Turkish woman to me as she caressed the little curly-headed girl who played at her knees. She added, "All my life's happiness is in that little form; my greatest sorrow was when I found it was physically impossible to nurse her, and every time I hear her call her foster-mother 'Anna' (mother), a name no doubt she deserves, I have just a tiny pain at my heart." And yet how good she is to this poor peasant woman. She had been deserted by her husband, her own child died a few days after its birth. "You understand," she went on, "she will stay with me as long as ever she likes.

She has been too good to my child for me ever to leave her without a home."

Aïche-Hanoum, the mother-to-be, for whom we bought presents, has been the subject of conversation for weeks past. To her all kinds of delicacies are sent, the most comfortable place is reserved for her in the harem, there is always some one to tuck her up amongst the cushions. How tenderly she is spoken of, how tenderly she is spoken to . . . in a short while Aïche will be called to fulfil the divine mission (according to the East) for which every woman was sent into the world. Then her outlook on life will be different. She will have a different position towards her friends; it is almost as if she had, as it were, risen in the social scale.

. . . . .

We went to visit Aïche, the very day the little new arrival was expected. "In all probability we shall stay all night," said my friend before we started. "But shall we not be in the way?" I asked. "Of course not," she replied. "How happy Aïche will be to feel we are there; we Turkish women always take part in one another's joys and sorrows."

With my British fear of being in the way where I was certainly of no use, I took my place with the other six friends of Aïche who had come to be present at this very important moment in her life's history.

We were seated round the big mangol alternately drinking coffee (which we ourselves made on the red-hot charcoal), smoking and eating sweets. Two of the ladies had bound their heads up with handkerchiefs to prevent their having headaches, a precaution I did not imitate however much my friends advised me to do so. We did not speak. We just sat round the mangol waiting, waiting. . . .

I occupied the most comfortable of the *mussaffir's* rooms (guests' rooms) that night, for the other guests' beds were made on mattresses on the floor, in the Eastern unceremonious fashion. I should have preferred to occupy one of these "emergency" beds—they are perfectly comfortable—for in the guests' room when I finally sank to rest after the safe arrival of the little girl, I had the same uncomfortable feeling of the unnecessary trouble I was giving.

But the Eastern woman has not yet begun what we in the West know as "the servant trouble." With the abolition of slavery, however, this is on its way. When all the slaves in Fâtima's family are married, she must necessarily employ hired domestics; with education "hired domestics" become *exigeants*. They will object to making coffee and emergency beds at all times and at all hours, then "good-bye" to the charming unceremonious hospitality of the East. . . . I asked a Turkish lady who had lived for some months in London what she most appreciated in

our capital. "What I know best," she answered, "is Mrs. ——'s registry office for servants."

The next afternoon a host of friends and acquaintances arrived to pay a visit to the mother and the little girl. In my country the doctor and the nurse would have forbidden these visits as the height of imprudence; here "it is a matter of habit." It is true the visitors, in most cases, only passed in a procession before the mother and child, but even that seemed unnecessary fatigue for the mother, much as I was assured to the contrary.

The mother and daughter were picturesquely arranged. The mother, in her big bed, covered with a priceless embroidery, and the child, in a smaller bed, covered with a smaller quilt of the same priceless embroidery, peacefully sleeping, and a French Sister of Mercy, with her big white *cornet*, playing the part of nurse. It was a pretty picture—a picture which brought tears of emotion to the eyes of the visitors. It is an old and beautiful masterpiece—the mother and her child—all the world over, and a masterpiece at which every true woman looks again and again, and always with delight.

All the guests brought presents for the mother and child, according to their means. Some were of the greatest value—jewels, embroideries, stuffs—and Fâtima tells me her "birth" presents formed a very important part of her trousseau. But why, at a Turkish birth ceremony, is cinna-

mon syrup given to the guests? No one can tell me. To me this beverage is the only unpleasant feature of a most charming ceremony.

They called her "Melek" (Angel), the little girl. I made a sign of the Cross on her little forehead. Her mother was pleased. And as I made that sign I wondered why our Western mothers are not honoured as they are in the East. Christ paid as high a tribute to maternity as Mahomet. Who is responsible for the misinterpretation of His words? Is it civilization, or is it the Church?

CHAPTER IX

WOMEN WRITERS OF TURKEY

THERE are not many, it is true, but there are Turkish writers and Turkish women writers. For so long, however, it has been the habit to condemn wholesale everything Turkish that most European nations have come to the inconsequent conclusion that there is no Turkish literature.

Say to the average European that you have started to study the Turkish language, and he will ask, "Unless you are to live in the country of what use is it? They have no literature." How many times has that remark not been made to me! Yet there are some very fine masterpieces, and it is to an English Professor, Professor Browne, of Cambridge, that we owe a five-volume study of the history of Ottoman poetry, an intensely interesting and fascinating book, which has followed me into the houses of my Turkish friends.

It seems extraordinary to make such sweeping assertions without giving chapter and verse. "Had the Turks had an Omar Khayyam, long

ago Europe would have known it," says the Western critic; "Most certainly, had the Turk had the supreme good fortune to be translated by a Fitzgerald," one might reply.

But it is not for one without an accurate knowledge of Turkish to compare the relative values of the Turkish and Persian poets. The Turks for a long period of their literary history bowed before the Persian culture, and once having accepted their methods, without, perhaps, any really particular reason for doing so, they remained loyal and faithful to the Persian culture, as they remained loyal and faithful to Islam. I wonder, however, since I have been studying some of the masterpieces of this language with my Turkish friend, whether often the disciple did not become greater than the master—great enough, at least, to require no longer the master's example. And then, as Browne and Gibbs have written, "it was when the Ottoman Muse had flung off her golden apparel, which for centuries the Persians had embroidered with gold and precious stones, as a present for her, and put on the Turkish chalvar (pantaloons) and enturi (tunic), that she assumed an air of youth, which suited her perfectly, and all the poets of the time admired her."

When last I visited Turkey five years ago I felt the time was very near when the Turkish woman of culture would have to find some art by which to express herself. Beauty's characteristic

is a desire for self-manifestation. The eternal blue of the sky and sea, the glorious sunsets, the silence, the solitude of an existence lived amongst people of another century ; the strong draught of idealistic pantheism there is in the religion of Mahomet—all give birth to beautiful thoughts ; the difficulty is to find a form of expression.

The Turkish woman is modest, as I have said in other chapters, and her modesty leads her into a lack of self-confidence which has been detrimental to her cause. Unlike the women of Western Europe, she has not inherited the tired brain of tired ancestors ; she has now awakened after centuries of rest, with a brain fresh and ready for work, and it is astonishing to see the ease with which she can learn.

And so it is in literature. Many of my friends can write verse, but they have not yet written prose, and the five Turkish women who can now lay claim to a place in the world of letters all began by writing verse.

Of the work of these five writers it is really unfair of me to speak, seeing I can judge their work only by translation, and that not at all well done. My object rather is to draw attention to the fact that they exist, and to induce those Turkish women, as, for example, Zeyneb Hanoum, who have a thorough knowledge of French, to save their compatriots' literary honour in the eyes of Europe by giving us good translations of their work.

Halidé-Hanoum's "Handan," which has been so widely circulated in her own land, is an interesting study of the Turkish woman's mind and life told in a series of letters. But how could this writer let her work make its bow to the Western world in its inaccurate, and often indelicate French translation? I have read no other work of this writer, and I believe "Handan" is not Halidé-Hanoum's best work. But the writer herself! what an interesting person! A slight, tiny little person, with masses of auburn hair and large, expressive Oriental eyes, she has opinions on most subjects, and discusses the problems of the day in a manner which charms one not so much on account of what she says, but because it is so different from what one expected. Strange it does seem that these women who have been bound and fettered for centuries, when once they begin to think, acknowledge in the world of thought no boundaries and restrictions. Again we and they are at the antipodes. We Englishwomen, who have a liberty of action the world envies, think, as a rule, in conventional grooves. With how many of my feminist countrywomen could I have discussed the subjects I have discussed with my Turkish friends?

It would not be without interest, perhaps, to notice how many Turkish women are to-day reading Ellen Key. Ellen Key in a Turkish harem naturally sounds a little alarming! But this herald of feminism to come cannot do as

much harm as she might in an English home, for I very much doubt whether they—except, of course, women like Halidé-Hanoum—understand what she means. It is true the titles "Love and Marriage," "The Century of a Child," are especially attractive to those women to whom the sentimental side of Western life appeals as being an unexplored territory, and I feel sure many have ordered the works of Ellen Key on the strength of their titles, and then cast them aside, to be read some other time.

"To the pure, all is pure," we say. The Turkish women generally, to my mind, are more pure-minded, perhaps, than the women of any other nation. This will certainly come as a surprise to many, who, with their erroneous ideas as to what a harem really is, still consider the women as beautiful, idle, intriguing creatures, and "passion" as the only drama that is played within its mysterious walls. How is it, then, that Turkish women have acquired this purity? I am not speaking of the ignorant women, who are innocent rather than pure, but the women who read and think. The explanation, I believe, is to be found in the fact that from the age when they begin to think the Turks are taught that nature must be respected.

As soon as children begin to ask what we call "embarrassing questions," they are told the truth. Mothers do not speak in whispers about subjects which are "perfectly natural"; from a very early

age children know exactly what "maternity" means. All nature, then, being taken as a matter of course, the *arrière-pensée* does not even come into existence; hence purity. When first I arrived in Turkey, however, I must confess I was surprised to hear the conversations which took place before the children. Now I see its advantages. Natural curiosity, unsatisfied, becomes morbid curiosity; morbid curiosity becomes degeneracy.

I heard the following conversation between a mother and her six-year-old son: "Mother," asked the little boy, "would it be very wicked of me if I didn't want to marry?" "Yes," replied the mother, "it is the duty of all men to marry." "Why is it the duty of all men to marry?" next he asked. "So that mothers may have dear little boys like you," she replied.

Of the work of Fâtima Alié Hanoum I have read only one book, "Oudi" (The Lute Player), in a French translation, which has kept none of the Eastern grace and charm of this writer's work, for her compatriots, men and women, universally pay homage to her fine talent, her subtle perception, her clear and poetical style, and her endless historical knowledge. Fâtima Alié Hanoum is no longer a young woman. She has a kind face, which shows at once her good heart; she is small, pale, thin, and exceedingly active, and her eyes sparkle with enthusiasm as she discusses with you the subjects which interest her most. Fâtima Alié is a feminist. She is strongly in

favour of women leading an active, useful life, and working at a profession if necessary, but she is decidedly opposed to the adoption of European fashions in literary style, as well as in clothing and furniture.

To her the picturesque stuffs of Broussa are worth more than all the wares in shops of Paris put together, and to her neat compromise between a dressing-gown and a dress which covers her uncorseted form and to her easy, if not elegant, slippers, she will remain faithful to the end of her days. But feminist though she is, she strongly opposes any attempt to modify the veil, not because the veil has to her a religious meaning, but to her it is one of the traditions of her race, and therefore sacred. No woman in Turkey has made a more thorough study of the Koran than she, and I am grateful to her for the pleasant moments spent in her "real Turkish" house whilst she has explained to me the position of women in Islam. The daughter of Djevdat Pasha, the celebrated Turkish Patriot, Fâtima Alié Hanoum has inherited documents which will make her work particularly valuable to those who are interested in the history of the Ottoman Empire. She is shortly to publish a history of the last four reigns, and she is particularly qualified to do this, since she worked for so many years as her late father's secretary.

It is interesting, but nevertheless sad, to find in studying the history of the women of Islam

that they, as we of the West, have lost so much of the power they once possessed. Let us imagine for an instant those olive-skinned, perfumed women of Arabia in their gaudy raiment (much in the fashion we are wearing to-day), half-gipsy, half-empress, even though they were in rags, listening to the preaching of Mahomet in the desert. Was it not to them particularly that he was preaching?

During the war they took their place beside their husbands, to whom they were faithful and devoted, and their deeds of daring would make our hair stand on end, we, the super-sensitive creatures of this century of half-tones and half-emotions! In time of peace these women were faithful and sweet creatures, kind to the stranger who sought the hospitality of their tent, the stranger who, unknown the night before, received from them enough to satisfy his hunger and to continue his journey. And the fact that they were women did not prevent their taking part in the great outer life around them. Mahomet's own daughter, known as the "Lady of Paradise," was one of the finest orators of the East.

During Charlemagne's reign, too, when Haroun-al-Rachid was Khalif of Baghdad, a woman, Zeyneb, was appointed professor of the University of Baghdad, and five hundred young men daily listened to her lectures on philosophy. Her reputation was so great that she was known throughout the East. Then there was Leyla,

the famous poetess, and Hind, the famous wit, who was asked to define the worst of women (her answer has stood the test of time and become proverbial). "The worst of women is she," she said, "who when begged to speak holds her tongue, and when begged to hold her tongue speaks."

There was about the fifteenth century, too, a poetess, Mihri, to whom we owe the following lines: "One day the loved one who was near me questioned me about my love. I gave him my soul, and he never spoke of it again." There was the poetess Fituat, also, whose work is full of sorrow and feeling, and who made for herself so great a reputation as a woman of letters. To understand her work, I am told, is like "taking part in the death of the whole world and the awakening of another." What an original criticism! And if you question the people of Asia Minor even to-day they will tell you history cannot find a greater attachment given to a woman of letters.

And so on through the ages. I could quote names of women who have done great work, women who have taken their place beside men. How is it they lost their power, and gradually sank down to the state of the poor nonentities whom Lady Mary Montagu visited? "Islam alone is responsible," says the Western critic. But this is false. Mahomet's mistake, perhaps, as a legislator, was that he gave too many rights

to the mothers, and not enough to women who were not mothers. Perhaps, I repeat. At any rate, all that has most oppressed and crushed the Turkish woman comes, not from Islam, but from, I was going to say, Christianity; I prefer the word Byzantium. The latticed windows, the wrong meaning of the veil, the harem, the eunuchs, the fez, the very Crescent itself, are all survivals of that Byzantium which has stifled, for a while, the life and soul of this people of the desert.

There are three more women of whom I must speak as modern Turkish women writers: Leyla Hanoum, an old lady now, whose verses were several times recited to me. I cannot judge her as a writer, except to repeat that the Turks themselves admire her work, and that when told they have no literature they indignantly ask, "And Leyla Hanoum?"

There is also the poetess Niguar Hanoum, Niguar, whose acquaintance I made at Monte Carlo after the proclamation of the Constitution. A woman of great charm and intelligence and an exceedingly hard worker, it is she herself who will translate her own beautiful lyrics into French and German.

Another woman whose talent has been very much appreciated in her own land is Eminé Semié, a sister of Fâtima Alié Hanoum. Her novels have not been translated. Her political articles have been of no little assistance to Young Turkey. I met this famous authoress first in

Paris; it was during the recent war. Not one luxury would she allow herself, not even a cab in the pouring rain, and all her beautiful jewels she sold in order to send the money to the Red Crescent Society. She had worn herself almost to skin and bone as a Red Crescent nurse, and had been sent to Paris to recuperate. Her impressions of the gay capital were all so charming and original.

But I cannot close this chapter on the women writers of Turkey without speaking of "Kadinlar-Dunyassi" ("The Feminine World"), a weekly illustrated paper devoted to women's interests, whose pages are open to any woman writer who cares to contribute. It was started, first of all, as a daily illustrated paper—rather an ambitious idea, but as such it was a failure, and was therefore quickly converted into an illustrated weekly.

The proprietor and editress of the paper, Oulvyé Mevlane Hanoum, had had no experience whatsoever either of editing or of the business side of running a paper; therefore, the result of her effort is doubly interesting. She understood that if a serious society for the advancement of women was to be founded they must have an organ in which to explain their views. She saw the need, and she supplied it.

The publication of this paper is a very happy omen for all those who take an interest in the woman question. It shows what Turkish women can do when they have confidence in themselves

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE NEW TURKISH WOMAN'S PAPER "KADINLAR-DUNYASSI"
("THE FEMININE WORLD")

and a determination to succeed—unfortunately two qualities they rarely possess. I do not mean to say they are lazy, but they lack concentration certainly, and are too proud to risk a failure. But all this will change. Only by measuring ourselves against the great can we understand how they, too, have tried and failed over and over again, then we take courage.

What matters it whether the articles of "Kadinlar-Dunyassi" are not equal to those published in the daily papers! If every Turkish word were badly spelt and every phrase badly constructed, and every article poor, I should still rejoice at the publication of "Kadinlar-Dunyassi," because it is a co-operative effort—co-operative effort alone can save Turkey.

And now where are those women who are seeking to express themselves to turn for assistance? To the West naturally, and to France. It was Shinasi Effendi who ended the Persian allegiance—Shinasi Effendi who took his countrymen to the West, and is rightly considered the founder of the modern school of Ottoman literature. The hazard which turned him towards the West is interesting, as showing on how slender a thread a great change may depend. Shinasi was born about 1826, in the Top-Hané division of Constantinople. After attending the parish school he entered the Imperial Arsenal, and when there made the acquaintance of the Comte de Châteauneuf, who afterwards became a Turk,

embraced Islam, and became known as Rechid Bey. This Frenchman was the grandfather of my friends Zeyneb[1] and Melek[2] Hanoums, the heroines of Pierre Loti's "Désenchantées."

From Châteauneuf, who admired the intelligence of the youth, Shinasi received the French lessons which created in him the strong desire to become more and more intimately acquainted with the culture of the West, and he never rested till his great desire was accomplished and he finally went to Paris. An interesting study might be written of the career of this extraordinary man, whose translation of the French classics, especially of Voltaire and Rousseau, changed the whole destiny of his country's literature and history. Just as the French expressed themselves in French, so the Turks, after Shinasi, learnt not to express themselves in Persian construction, but to say what they wanted to say in a Turkish construction.

After Shinasi came Ziva Pasha, the great Kemal, who was exiled after the publication of "Vatran" ("The Fatherland"), and who in his writings paid so high a tribute to England: and finally, the greatest of modern Turkish poets and writers—Abdul-Hak-Hamid, for some time at the Turkish Embassy in London. The publication of his "Makber" ("Tomb") com-

[1] Zeyneb.—Co-authoress of "The Turkish Woman's European Impressions."

[2] Melek.—Co-authoress of "Adbul Hamid's Daughter."

pletely revolutionized Turkish literature. Shinasi had shown the way: Abdul-Hak-Hamid took it, and his verses are already Turkish classics, recited in all the schools.

And now for the political side of Shinasi's work. It is necessary for me to point out that a careful study of Rousseau gave birth to the Young Turk party, which overthrew the most terrible absolutism the world has known, to my mind more terrible even than the absolutism of Nero.

The absence of what we in the West call "social life" naturally makes the Turks great readers, and the sale of French books in Turkey is enormous. Books, good, bad, and indifferent, are read, and there are some who blame the "French novel" for all the shortcomings of the Turkish youth of to-day.

Unfortunately, the number of persons who read English is limited. I say unfortunately, because the spirit of our literature is much better suited to the Turkish character. It is astonishing to notice how many qualities of the Englishman the "real" Turk possesses, and particularly his *sangfroid* in moments of difficulty and danger. In appearance, too, many of them are so like my own countrymen (and particularly a naval officer whom I met the other day), that one wonders often whether they are not Englishmen in the Turkish service.

Although a translation is, after all, only the wrong side of an embroidery, I have, wherever I

can, urged my friends, since they cannot read our masterpieces in English, to read them in the French translation.

The Turks may not quite agree with me, but it has seemed to me everywhere I went that our literature comes as a surprise to them. We have the reputation of being a solid, matter-of-fact, honest nation, with a mighty fleet. England still puts her hall-mark of "all-rightness" on everything she touches, but somehow literature and art are not expected of us. The Turks will tell you they have read our masterpieces, they know our literature . . . but I saw none in any of the libraries of the colleges I visited. Voltaire, Rousseau, V. Hugo, Vigny, Anatole France, Pierre Loti, and now a "promise" of Wells and Kipling.

I must add, however, in defence of the Turks, that this neglect of our literature is very largely our own fault. What have we done to spread the knowledge of our language in the near East? And what has France done? Les Dames de Sion, the Lazarists, and the innumerable other orders who, when driven from France, sought the hospitality of the kindly Turk, what have they not done to further the knowledge of their language, not only in Constantinople, but throughout the East? And we?

CHAPTER X

THE PROPHET AND POLYGAMY

NO book on Turkey would be complete without a chapter on polygamy—in justice to the Turk such a chapter is necessary. It is the chapter to which every reader will turn first of all, and not *one* critic will allude to it. How well I know my countrymen!

Let me at once confess, however, to the morbid curiosity of actually trying to find a "harem" where there was more than one wife. Fâtima wished to satisfy that curiosity if it were possible. "You must see us as we really are," said she and her husband, "and if this unfortunate blot on our civilization is still to be seen, you shall see it." And he really went out of his way, this kind, courteous host of mine, Fâtima's husband, to ask all and sundry where, in Constantinople, could be found two women sharing the protection of one lord and master, and for a long time not one was to be found.

I have met, however, men and women who are the children of fathers who had more than one

wife. They are too proud to speak of their unhappy youth, but since we find them in the front ranks of those who are standing for the elevation of womanhood, we must necessarily draw our own conclusions. One of the most beautiful of modern Turkish poems is written by a feminist orator, describing in touching, eloquent notes the tragedy of being a child in a polygamous household.

To me, the lover of the East and the admirer of Islam, this "permission" to have four wives is regrettably unfortunate. From that "permission" we have totally misinterpreted the words of the Great Prophet of the Desert; we have classed Islam as a religion destined to encourage sensuality, a religion devoid of spirituality, a religion which has degraded womanhood, whereas, those who take the trouble to study particularly that part of the Koran relating to women must pay homage to the wonderful foresight of this great reformer.

When Mahomet limited the number of wives to four, he was legislating for a people which polygamy had reduced to the depths of degradation, and those who will compare the history of the period when Mahomet began his ministry and the period afterwards, must surely admit the high place given to women in his teachings and the excellent laws made for their protection.

The poor down-trodden woman of the East is one of the fallacies which has descended

DANCING CLASS AT THE GIRLS' SCHOOL, BROUSSA

through the ages, and nothing has done more to increase the misunderstanding between East and West than the Western disdain for what, to the Oriental, is all that he counts most sacred—his women and his religion.

When Mahomet limited the number of wives to four, he was legislating for a people who could not be brought too suddenly from the outer darkness to the great blazing light of civilization, but he put what appear almost like codicils to annul the statement about polygamy when he ordained that each wife must be treated with an equal amount of tenderness, that man *and woman* must seek knowledge "from the cradle to the grave," and "that they must keep travelling about, for there were many beautiful things to be seen on God's earth." There is also that splendid verse which I hope my feminist friends will stretch to its utmost capacity: "You must march on with the centuries." Time and knowledge will put everything right, argued the Prophet. Alas! is it not the tragedy which accompanies the life-work of every great reformer for the meaning of his words to be misinterpreted?

Mahomet in his time was confronted with a woman's problem as entangled as the woman's problem of to-day. Although he considered maternity the destiny of woman, he did not prevent her entering the professions. Few women, however, could work, and since she

could not work she had to be provided for. Was it not better for four women to be housed and cared for than for one to live in luxury and three to starve? No man was obliged to take advantage of the Prophet's permission to have four wives, but the Prophet, with his keen knowledge of humanity, foresaw the danger to which the woman might be exposed, and polygamy was the loophole through which her honour could be saved.

But now all this is changing. For some time now polygamy has been very *mal vu*, and nothing hurts a Turk more than the eternal Western question: "How many wives have you?" An officer on board the man-o'-war which brought the Turkish Crown Prince to our Coronation tells me that every Englishwoman with whom he danced at the Naval Ball asked him that same question, "How many wives have you?" And to every one he replied: "Just one dozen, and I hope to have one dozen more before I die." He was a bachelor.

Polygamy is not amongst the Turks the same smart smoking-room joke that it is in the West, and I have heard these Turks who are working day and night to save their country protesting with energy against the "princely privilege" of having more than one wife. "The whole system will have to be changed, and the sooner the better," a Young Turk said, and, even as I write, the news comes to me that the Turkish Govern-

ment has passed a decree forbidding polygamy in the Imperial household and refusing to recognize as legitimate any but the children of the first living *wife*.

This is, perhaps, the most important reform that Young Turkey has so far brought about, a change which will do more than anything to heighten her prestige in Europe, and it is the first step towards the formation of a "court" as we in the West understand that word.

It was during the reign of Abdul Hamid that the absurd rule which allowed Royal princes only to marry slaves was so strictly observed. So terrified was the ex-Sultan, in particular, of giving power to a subject, through the alliance of his family with the daughters of Pashas or Imperial Princes, that the wives of the Emperors had to be chosen from amongst the slaves of the Imperial harem—from amongst those girls who had been bought at an early age on account of their physical qualifications *only*, and their Circassian parents being paid a sum down renounced any claim to these children. These girls were prepared for the rôle of Empress which they might one day be called upon to play, dancing and music being very important items in their education. Then they had to await such time as they might find favour in the "Master's" sight and become his favourites.

A ugly, unhealthy atmosphere surrounds this buying and selling of human beings after careful

used, the guardian of the mosque told me, to write his books in the Green Mosque, sunk in the magnificent carpets, the quality and beauty of which have defied time, with on one side of him the door (which replaces our altar) of exquisitely blended green porcelain and beautifully worked golden lettering, and on the other side the central fountain, which, from its multitude of invisible mouths, sends out a gorgeous mass of exquisitely coloured rainbows between you and the sun.

Before dawn Loti was in the mosque, working all day in the hallowed atmosphere of God's house, the kindly guardian bringing him coffee and his *narghili* when he required them, and arranging the cushions when he wished to sleep. Loti's best work was done in the Green Mosque at Broussa. No wonder!

. . . . .

No one could dread more the advent of electric cars and light than the Princess. "It will not be Broussa any more," she says, and rightly so, and yet the Princess herself is helping on progress—she has started schools in the town itself and in the neighbouring villages, she herself bearing the entire expense. And the little girls are taught Western dancing, they sing Western songs, and recite Western poetry. How is one to make a compromise between the two civilizations? I sympathize, however, with the Princess in her reluctance to welcome such intruders as cars and electric light. When once this tide of

progress comes in it will sweep all before it. Historical associations will have to give place to hideous Western factories; smoking chimneys will obscure the sight of the minarets; but no longer shall we see the cabman tying up his back wheel with a cord to replace the brake. The students in the "Medressa" (college of Theology), the future Hodjas whom I saw busy washing their linen in the fountain, where will they be in the days of Western steam laundries?

. . . . .

It is very difficult to give accurate knowledge about members of the Imperial family, unless brought into intimate contact with them. Their subjects do not know them, and they multiply so quickly that it is easy for a stranger to credit princes with accomplishments they do not possess and overlook the qualities of those princes who deserve praise. Of some of the princes it would be charitable to guard a discreet silence, and, after all, so little is required of them: they cannot even play a "spectacular" part, as our Western royalties do. Therefore, says Young Turkey, and wisely so, the State can no longer afford to keep these ever-recurring princes: one family is quite sufficient for each member of the Imperial house, we will recognize no more.

To all those who stake any importance whatsoever on soul heredity, this Eugenic manner of arranging Imperial marriages is a dangerous experiment. Fortunately they were given Cir-

cassian wives, otherwise whence would so many Imperials have acquired their talents, charm, and moral qualities. And Abdul Hamid, the criminal genius and madman, the monster tyrant —how far was he responsible for his actions? Who can tell us the truth about his birth? Some say he was born of an Armenian dancer, others credit him with French blood, brought into the Imperial harem by a lady of that race, captured by brigands and sold into slavery. All kinds of suppositions are advanced to explain the curious mentality of this man, who still puzzles criminologists of the twentieth century.

Most sincerely is Young Turkey to be congratulated on this new and enormous step towards progress. It is a bold step. Any blow levelled against the dynasty, any modification of the "divine" rights of the Kalife, is liable to rouse ignorant fanaticism of those turban-headed masses in Asia Minor who still know neither the meaning of Kalife nor that of the Constitution, but would willingly die for both.

CHAPTER XI

THE MAN WITH TWO WIVES

I HAD given up hope of seeing a Turkish house where there was more than one wife. I was sorry, and Fâtima was sorry that she was unable to satisfy my curiosity. The opportunity came, however, when we least expected it.

We were sipping our coffee one day in the big salon. *Guzel Sutanna* (the beautiful nourrice), as I called Fâtima's nourrice to distinguish her from her little daughter's nourrice, had tucked us up comfortably amongst the cushions, and whilst distributing to us lumps of pumpkin preserve which she had made for our special benefit, she was recalling certain chapters of her own strange life-story which Fâtima translated for me.

I loved *Guzel Sutanna*. She was so superbly human. Sorrow had sweetened what was still a beautiful face, beautiful enough to allow one to guess what her beauty and charm had been. She had had six successive husbands. Her lords and masters, she confessed quite as a matter of

course, had never been more to her than a means towards an end. Maternity was her rôle, not wifehood; then God gave to her for a little while what the old nourrice called "the most precious of His angels," but death and the Imperial Harem took them all away from her, and in her old age she became what she had firmly made up her mind from girlhood she never would be—childless. Such is the irony of life!

And so Fâtima became the whole world to the old nourrice. She could have lived with us altogether, but her young master (for this old lady had married a man many years her junior), claimed a certain amount of her attention, yet she generally managed to come and see Fâtima every day, and always bringing with her some of her delicious violet and rose jams.

We had made up our minds that Fâtima's husband must try to obtain a diplomatic post and live for a while in England. I was teasing *Guzel Sutanna*, telling her in England her services would no longer be required, that I should look after Fâtima. But the old nourrice was not to be worsted. "Tell me," she said to Fâtima, "as soon as the appointment becomes official, then I will marry my husband to some one else and come with you."

The old nourrice had the form of a young woman. A green plaid dress covered her uncorseted body, around her waist she wore a gold belt and round her neck a thick gold chain

which Fâtima had given her, and which she wore day and night. Her skin was not too wrinkled for her age, her eyes magnificent, and sometimes her rebellious little *hennéd* curls would come peeping out from under her pink silk turban. In the streets she wore a black satin tcharchaff and was also well shod; her manners were aristocratic, and as she was generally somewhere within calling distance of Fâtima, I supposed at first she must be a relation.

One of my greatest difficulties in Turkey is to be sure of the social standing of the men and women. The man you might easily in my country take for a groom is perhaps the Pasha's son; the man you might take for the Pasha's son is perhaps a domestic. The woman seated in the place of honour, dressed like a charwoman, may be the mother of a great statesman or a minister's wife, and amongst them all sits the old nourrice, one of the family.

The nourrice's answer to my teasing was so different from what I had expected that I did not take her seriously till she began asking questions about my country. "What did it matter after all," she concluded, "if the sun never shone?" She would be there to make the clove wine if Fâtima coughed, and the coffee and the pilaff, too; she would be there to speak to Fâtima in the language of their own native land, and above all to teach the little girl to say her prayers. The one thing which was worrying her, however, was her veil.

What would she do if the police tried to make her wear a hat? She never had worn one and she never would.

"But your husband," I ventured to suggest.

"Fâtima is my child," she answered, "I will choose him a suitable wife," and she seemed astonished that I should see anything extraordinary in the fact that a foster mother should follow her child even to the other end of the earth, if necessary, and relieve her conscience by seeing that her husband was properly cared for during her absence.

I asked Fâtima whether this situation was frequent in Turkey. "It does happen," she answered. Then she told me the curious life story of the golden-haired erstwhile beauty, who in the evening of her existence was allowed to occupy a modest place in the basement of our Konak in exchange for her occasional service as dish-washer. She had started her career as an oar maiden on the caique in which the Sultan Abdul-Aziz rowed about on the lake in his park when he was weary. But she grew tired of celibacy, asked to be allowed to marry, and finally was presented to an old Pasha as a reward for his distinguished services to the State.

When the Pasha died, she married a man years her junior, whom she loved with all her heart and soul, and who in his turn loved her. Knowing how bitterly disappointed he was not to have children, she herself found another wife for him,

left for her successor everything she possessed, and came penniless to Fâtima. And her husband? When not washing dishes, she dreams of him as she wanders amongst the garden trees, she writes long letters to him which she never posts, and he, probably, has forgotten her very existence.

All these curious stories brought us back to the subject of polygamy, and the harem with two wives I wanted to visit.

"Do you know of a harem where there is more than one wife?" asked Fâtima.

"Yes!" answered the nourrice, "my two friends, the wives of the Dervishe 'R.'"

The words "My two friends" surprised me just a little, but I made no comment. It was arranged, however, that I should go the next day to the dervishe service and *Sutanna* should take me afterwards to call on the two wives. *Sutanna* knew all the dervishes in the out-of-the-way districts of old Stamboul. These performances, I may at once explain, have little in common with the paid exhibitions arranged for tourists in Pera and Scutari. The Faithful howled and danced not for the curious spectators, for none were admitted, but to praise the Lord, the whole of their creed being based on the words of the Psalmist David: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, make a loud noise and sing praise."

On these occasions I accompanied *Sutanna* to the woman's gallery, always wearing a veil. Seated on a cushion I watched the worshippers

below through the lattice work of the gallery. The atmosphere was never very invigorating, the lack of fresh air being supplied by an unpleasant mixture of incense, sandal wood, and tobacco, and a stuffiness which almost choked me. We were so many women huddled together in this kind of magnified dog-kennel, and the worshippers, too, needed some space to do the same movements as the male howlers in the body of the mosque below. The dancing dervishes were charming. I enjoyed the weird piping of what sounded like a shepherd's flute, the curious beating of the drum, the graceful movements of the men as they "waltzed" bare-foot on the polished boards, their wide skirts expanding and contracting like a well-chosen crescendo. Curiously enough the women did not attend or follow the "dancers" with the same delight as the "howlers"; they preferred the noise. What an extraordinary conception must they not have had of the Deity, these poor primitive souls, that they should suppose He would find delight in the medley of grunt and bark which accompanied their curious contortions and drowned in its hideousness the wonderful words "Allah al Ecbar." (God is Great.)

I was studying the profile of the polygamous dervishe who sat on his legs amongst the Faithful, his arms crossed on his chest and his head reverently bowed. He had a turned-up nose, on the top of which rested a growth. He certainly was

a hideous specimen of humanity, and yet two women loved him!

Yes, after all, is not humanity the same all the world over, Mahomet saw the danger of a priesthood, he did not wish the holy men to have more power than, let us say, the recorder of the Quakers. The Sheik-ul-Islam himself impressed upon me that there were no priests in Islam, and yet here, face to face with the truth, are dervishes who have grafted on to the bare spirituality of the religion of Mahomet *credenda*, fanaticism and external manifestations, just as the priesthood of the West has done in a different manner from the religion of Christ.

Every one of the dangers which Mahomet tried to guard against in denying a priesthood to Islam are in existence to-day. The words of the Prophet are interpreted in such a manner as to keep the people in ignorance, and in spite of the large sums of money left by the Faithful to pious foundations for their enlightenment. Do not the dervishes in the Tekhi live on the fat of the land and enjoy all the privileges of the "cloth"? It makes one sore to think when money for the regeneration of the country is so urgently needed that a poor woman whose six sons fell in the war gives her bed-cover to the National Defence, all this money is lying there in so unproductive a form. It surprised me rather that, when the shoe pinched so hard, the Turkish Government did not take a leaf out of France's book, and help

itself to some of these funds. After all, however, they have acted wisely, for the money can now be used for National Education.

The dervishe's two wives came in towards the end of the ceremony. Sutanna, after kissing them both, introduced me, and we were invited to coffee in the harem. The first wife was a sickly looking, resigned creature, not very much older than her colleague, to whom she seemed quite attached ; indeed, her attitude towards her rival was rather that of a mother. She was quite content to wear the old clothes, to do the work to be done, to wait on us, to give way in everything to the second wife, a well-built, healthy woman not without charm, and whom Allah had blessed, for she was to be a mother.

The first wife talked to Sutanna with delight about the expected new-comer, and alluded to it as "our child."

She worked at its layette, she spared its mother every fatigue, she seemed as enthusiastic as a mother whose daughter is expecting a child ; and yet, who knows the sorrow which may have been gnawing at her heart-strings?

For she loved her Master ; she was proud of him. Sutanna had her confidence and told me so, and it was she and Sutanna together who chose as her successor, a friend of their own.

Strange and inexplicable it all seemed, and not altogether pleasant. "Our grandmothers," one woman explained to me, "submitted to this as

their written fate; they could not understand why pride should not allow us to accept such a degrading position."

The pride of the Turkish woman takes her through an ocean of suffering. Just as the woman of the last generation accepted to remain with a rival for the sake of her children, now the woman of this generation is too proud to take advantage of the protection the law gives her in monetary assistance for the upbringing of her children when she leaves her husband. Personally, I know more than two women working against terrible odds to pay for the children's education. When I have suggested alimony, "Never!" they answer.

They, however, like other women of Turkey, will learn as the women of the West are learning, that they must, as individuals, insist on their rights for the benefit of the community, and reserve their pride for something else.

CHAPTER XII

FARTHER AFIELD—THE PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

ALAS! I have stayed too long in the charming society of Fâtima. In my quiet Eastern existence I have not noticed the flight of time. I came for a week, and I have stayed over twelve. Soon, I believe, I should have taken Fâtima's advice to send for my mother and stay here altogether.

And now winter has come. In my own country I had mapped out quite a different programme for myself. Constantinople, after all, is not Turkey. To know Turkey I must go right into the homes of the people of Anatolia, and the thought of spending my days on horseback and my nights sometimes in the homes of the primitive Turks, sometimes under the starlit sky, with the glorious Eastern moon to kiss me to sleep, gave me courage to break away for a while from my matter-of-fact grinding existence of the West. But I have been so completely under the spell of my new life that I have not even known the day of the month. When writing one of my letters I remember

I questioned a friend as to the date. "Must you really put the date?" she asked. "It isn't a matter of life and death," I answered, "but one generally does so in my country." "Well, my dear," she went on, "you must wait till my husband returns, he, perhaps, will know; I haven't the least idea."

Ah, happy country, where one can forget even the date! Alas!—yes, I say alas!—its hour has come. It, too, will have to take on the uncomfortable yoke of civilization, and be a plain, matter-of-fact people, like the rest of Europe. I have felt all the while I stayed with Fâtima as if I were present at a beautiful sunset, and I must not lose the joy of drinking in every ray of light, for in a few moments night would be there. "How you notice every detail," Fâtima said to me one day. "It is all so beautiful," I replied, as I felt this was the end of the true "East" in the old sense of the word—the cook, who goes to sleep over his work, and serves the meals according to the sun, or a still more accurate timepiece—his own healthy appetite; the coachman, whose two great passions are his horses and the history of Turkey, which he has acquired from conversation only, since he can neither read nor write; Miss Chocolate, who in a month's time will take her place as the wife of a coffee-skinned railway official. I had the feeling when I left my dear Fâtima this morning that when next I return to this country

this charming picture will have passed into eternity.

And Fâtima herself! A true daughter of the East, and proud to be so. Dear little friend, with the blue-black hair, olive skin, and dark eyes!—such a striking contrast to myself. How, in the hurry and bustle of our life, I shall miss her soft, low voice, and the gentle touch of her hand, and the "Let us sit down quietly and rest, and I will explain our Eastern customs to you." I have been with Fâtima in the hardest moments of her life. Where has that tiny little creature found in these moments of anguish—which would have crushed us Western women used to the tumble and rough of life—a strength of will to carry her dry-eyed through an ocean of suffering? These Turks have the pride of Emperors. How we have misjudged them! When the enemy was at their very door, when half their Fatherland was gone, Europe noticed how they listened to all the news with dry eyes and apparently resigned indifference. But this is not indifference—it is pride. When Fâtima was mourning the loss of her little baby girl she told me calmly her heart was broken, but never would she let me see the tears which soaked her pillow at night. Indifference, indeed! I never met any one who cared less for her own woes and more for the woes of others. Lady Mary Montagu was right when she said, "There is as much sense in asking the refugees of Greek-

street to write about the Court of St. James's as in asking the average woman to write about the women of Turkey."

And now, although winter is here, I have come as far as Broussa and the neighbouring villages to take a peep into the lives of these primitive people of Asia Minor. The sea has been rough for days ; so rough that the cautious captain has preferred to remain quietly in the sheltered harbour. But to-day, one might almost imagine the hospitable Turks had ordered the Bosphorus to spread itself out into a blue satin carpet all along the way, and the sun to give a special performance in my honour.

A comfortable cabin is reserved for me. I am accompanied by one of the most eloquent orators of the Young Turk party, N—— Bey, who in his turn is accompanied by a secretary. This man is a patriot to the core ; nothing counts with him but his Fatherland. He would be a gentleman even were he in rags, and if he had to assassinate an enemy of his beloved Fatherland, at least he would set about it like a gentleman. The boat we travelled on was named after a favourite Sultana. The first thing that greeted my eye was the notice, " Private cabin." Was everything on board, then, to be translated into English ? My heart thumped with delight. Alas ! things do not always go as quickly as one could wish, and the explanation of the English was nothing more poetical than the fact that the steamboat

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which now bears the name of a much-loved Sultana was a cast-off boat belonging to the Brighton and South Coast Railway Company.

On the little stretch of railway which extends from Modana to Broussa no one hurries. One station is called "The Persians," and the next "The Jews," and each time the train stops the kindly guard gives the *souje* (water merchant) a chance of doing some business before the train moves on again. "If only you had come in the spring," my companion tells me, as I give way to the enthusiasm I feel for all I see around me, "you, who love the flowers, what pleasure they would give you!" But I am content with small mercies. Everything, after all, is relative in this world. And when I think of London at this moment, shrouded in fog, whilst we are surrounded by a blue sky, a blue sea, trees in all their autumn glory, and the air which caresses my face like *iced velvet*, I am thankful for what Broussa can give me at present.

We had a long, cold drive from the station, but I do not mind this in the least, for the long way takes me by the tomb of Kara Kheuz and his partner, Hadgi Vadt. Two insignificant turban-topped stones, which time has almost laid horizontal, spring out of the bank on the side of the road. One gets so used in Turkey to seeing tombs springing out of places where they are least expected that unless one's attention were particularly drawn to it one would

never have noticed this insignificant, neglected burial-place of a great man. I say great man, because I am told that it is from Kara Kheuz that the great Molière took so much of his inspiration, and his well-known *que fait-il dans cette galère*? comes straight from this source.

In the inn where we are staying there is no woman to attend to me. This does not trouble me in the very least, and men, after all, make excellent housemaids. They give me cheese for breakfast, rustic bread, and coffee *à la turque*, after which I rise early and dress, in order to see all there is to be seen whilst the daylight lasts. The inn is situated on a hill; there are sulphur and Turkish baths attached to it. Broussa is the happy possessor of springs, which for a European *Kurort* would be a fortune; but where is the European who would come to a *kurort* without a casino? Our inn is not in Broussa itself, but in the neighbouring village. Broussa lies at the foot of the hill, bathed in a pale blue mist, which looks from the distance like the sea, and there are lines of naked poplar trees jutting out of the wide blue expanse, and an horizon such as I love, for it never seems to end.

S—— Bey, the sympathetic principal of the Broussa Lycée for boys, is to be my guide whilst I am here. My guide from Constantinople is visiting his old friends, who are arranging a meeting-lecture at the town hall, for never is

THE FOOTBALL TEAM OF THE BROUSSA LYCÉE

this charming politician allowed to leave a town without first speaking to the people. A lecture from N—— Bey! It is the event of the year! There is nothing whatsoever going on here after sunset. A handful of dimly lighted cafés, where a few resigned-looking Turks sit sipping a halfpenny cup of coffee, talking rarely, smoking generally, and occasionally humming a favourite ghazelle (a popular song which sounds to my Western ear like a dirge). But when N—— Bey speaks the cafés are deserted, and the proprietors themselves are amongst the audience.

It was a splendid meeting. A seething mass of 2,000 odd fezzes and turbans; old and young, rich—or rather, shall we say, the better class—and poor, workmen, hamals, and the Grand Vizier's brother. The present Governor of Broussa, who was himself absent, was represented. The prefect and his officials came to the big entrance door to fetch me, and after a little speech of welcome conducted me into the *mayoral* parlour, where I drank coffee and syrup before the meeting began. The prefect is one of those kind-faced Orientals who belong to the Turkey which is passing away. He has a little, withered-up, dark-skinned face, and big, brown, wondering eyes; he wears a long coat made of Persian embroidery, and lined with fur, and a big turban, which looks too heavy for his small head, and although he is the municipal head of the ancient capital of the Turks, he can neither read nor write.

And here, again, the inborn good manners of the Turks struck me. They had never before seen a woman at one of their meetings; they did not stare at me during the speech, they did not hang about the door to see the "curious monster" arrive and depart. When I took my seat beside the Prefect and his officials they rose respectfully; then I became one of themselves, and they paid no further attention to me.

I asked N—— Bey, when we travelled to Broussa, whether he prepared his speeches. "No," said he, "I speak from my heart." Although during the speech I understood no more than that his subject was the Fatherland, the sight of this man, who was ready to lay down his life for the Fatherland in danger, giving out the fire of his eloquence to stir the people to be ready, and this whole mass of people sobbing, moved me also to tears. That I should have wept without understanding a word sounds incomprehensible. I understood the sacred word "Fatherland." That was enough. Now should all Western critics who spoke of the Turkish "indifference" come and see these tears—tears of old men and boys. Where were the fathers of these youths and the sons of the old men? I asked. The answer I knew—they had fallen for the Fatherland.

N—— Bey, explaining the reasons for the Turkish losses, found three principal causes: First, the absence of the clergy, if the Moslem holy men

can be called by that name. "Ever since the beginning of Islam," said he, "the clergy have been at the wars encouraging the soldiers when they grew faint-hearted, and helping to care for the sick. In this last war not one Hodja took part." Secondly, he blamed the dynasty for not sending one of its members to lead the troops. Before the reign of Abdul-Hamid the Kalife of Islam always led the troops; the dynasty, like the clergy, had forgotten its duty. The third cause found was that the people had not obeyed the dictates of civilization. That is true. But on whom can the blame be laid? On the shoulders of that fallen tyrant who is eking out his days in a prison-palace on the shores of the Bosphorus. It is when one goes about this country and sees the extraordinary ignorance of this people that one realizes something of the hideous crime of the Sovereign, who for thirty-three years terrorized his people, and the extraordinary courage of the Young Turks who deposed him.

Civilization the Turks must have. Much as I have loved the reposeful nature of the quiet cities of Islam, much as I feel the sight of electric light and gas and electric trams offends my artistic soul, I know only too well that Turkey must "move on with the centuries." And here again one recognizes the gigantic task the Young Turks have before them. Hamid is no longer on the throne, but Hamid's work lives

on. You cannot repair in five years the damage of thirty-three. You cannot in five years change the character of a people used to a régime of terror. I see in the faces of these poor old men a resignation which is the result of a crushing and brutalizing tyranny; they are like horses which have taken fright. What can Young Turkey do with them? "You cannot put new wine into old bottles," says the Prophet of Nazareth. Young Turkey is wise in staking all its efforts on the coming generation, and giving power to a Minister not yet thirty years of age.

S—— Bey is determined I shall not leave Broussa till I have visited every stone it contains. It was the "woman's day" at the Turkish baths this morning, and I went into all the steaming heat to see the women of the people spending, as it were, a holiday. They can stay there all day for 2*d.* if they like; so they take their food, and their children, and their children's children, and make a day of it. Fat old ladies in gaudy-coloured tunics sit huddled up in corners singing contentedly, others walk about, dragging their clogs over the baking marble floors, whilst little girls and boys, with wine flasks tied round their waists in the place of lifebelts, swim about the fountains like little brown fishes.

We have been to the market-place and the old bazaar, which very much resembles the bazaar of Stamboul, except that one has Moslem merchants to deal with instead of Levantine Christians.

What a charming difference! Yes, but these good-mannered men will never make successful merchants. I buy a piece of embroidery. "The price," says the merchant, "is 12 francs.—2*d.* profit for me," he adds. I offer 10*s.* for a blue stone. "I could not take more than 6*d.*," says the merchant; "it is only glass."

I want to buy a couple of the charming blue bead necklaces which every quadruped here wears round his neck. It does not matter really whether his harness is worn almost to a thread, no harm can come to him if he has the bead necklaces round his neck. "This lady loves your country," S—— Bey tells the merchant, and the merchant will not take a penny for his wares. I go to see the Broussa silks. "Is this the lady who loves my country?" asks the merchant. A pink silk dress is mine, but all attempts to get the bill have been in vain.

And, at the bazaar at Stamboul, who has not experienced the disagreeable bartering which takes place between the merchant and the customer? I went one day with Fâtima. The man tried to sell us imitation antique embroideries for the price of real antiques. Fortunately, Fâtima knew the difference, for I did not. Then the merchant showed us the real article. "Very beautiful," commented he; "a beautiful price!" replied Fâtima. "But I never cheat Turks," although he had tried, he assured us, "only English people," for, naturally, he did not recognise through the

thick veil I was wearing the features of a woman of that race "he always cheated when he could."

The women in the villages here are not veiled, as are the women of Constantinople. Their hair and shoulders are covered with yellow embroideries, of which I was given a sample, and they sit astride their ponies, mules, or donkeys, as the case may be, often without saddles, and a well-worn cord only as bridle and reins. They carry a rather substantial twig of a tree for a whip, which they hold threateningly before the donkey's eyes whilst mounting, but I never saw them use it.

Horseback, of course, is the only way of getting about this country. The horses are sure-footed, if not very active, and at each village travellers find a fairly steady pole, to which a horse is tied up and left. The kindly villagers feed him and water the horse, and the little, pantalooned children play with his tail and stroke his body—he is quite resigned. We rode over to Hamidlair, a village about two and a half hours away. On the verandah of the schoolhouse was placed a chair for me, which had been procured with very great difficulty. The schoolhouse itself could accommodate twenty children, ten little boys on one side, and ten little girls on the other, and the schoolmaster stands between the children and addresses first one sex and then the other. He, too, is a picturesque person, with the honest Eastern face and big, brown eyes. He wears

a turban and long, brown coat. The schoolmaster's salary is paid in corn, which means, of course, when the harvest is good, salary is high, and vice versa. It seems extraordinary to think that in this enlightened twentieth century wages can still be paid in corn.

I went to visit the wife of the schoolmaster. She lived in a two-storeyed house of four rooms, with a tiny garden, where a cow, a goat, and a lamb had space to walk about and remain great friends. The young wife was about seventeen, and lived with her mother and grandmother and little baby. They all came to the door to meet me, and, kissing the hem of my dress, they led me by the hand up a wooden staircase ladder to a room which was furnished with cushions all round —their chairs by day and their beds by night. The bare boards were scrupulously clean, and the cushions a welcome resting-place for my tired limbs. I wanted to take off my boots, like the other women, but my hostess refused to allow me. After having tucked me up amongst the cushions, with a queenly gesture she took off her ear-rings, her ring, and a jade bracelet, and gave them to me, but I naturally declined to accept them. This jewellery, together with a new pair of clove-ball silk pantaloons, were all the worldly goods this woman possessed, and she was ready to give them all to me, a stranger. Then the grandmother came, bringing for me a cup of milk warm from the goat, and the great-grandmother put in as a

token of respect for the honoured guest seven lumps of sugar. And I had to drink it!

I loved being among that primitive household. They had bread to eat and milk to drink; their own vegetables they grew in the little patch of garden, where the animals walked about at leisure, but they never ate meat, nor did they feel the want of it—to have told them they were poor would have surprised them.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PULSE OF THE NATION

A EUROPEAN official, who has lived here all his life (and he is an old man now), is astonished at my recklessness in trusting myself as I have done to the protection of the "unspeakable" Turks. He was born and bred with the idea that Turks were "unspeakable," and consequently has nothing to do with them, unless he can possibly help it, and when he does he lets them see he dislikes them. Extraordinary it is, that there should be Europeans in this country who, after living almost a lifetime amongst a people, have not got to know them one little bit better! They make their whole existence, as it were, an island—their thoughts, their actions, their words, even their friends—and fondly imagine themselves to be patriots. "How uncomfortable! How nasty! Oh! I wouldn't like that!" they exclaim, as I describe to them some of the customs of this people amongst whom they have lived over fifty years. "Whatever did you do in a household where there were no forks and knives?" The answer is not very difficult to guess; but they

seem incapable of understanding my delight at eating with my fingers, like the primitive people who entertained me.

And yet, after only a short time, how different is my experience of these same "unspeakable" Turks! Every day since I have been here some woman comes with a present for me! I have received a wooden spoon, stuffs, embroideries, Brussels sprouts, melons, sweetmeats, yourout (curdled milk), and one poor woman has walked from a neighbouring village, bringing me a little lamb; I have explained to her, however, that although I much appreciate her gift, the dog of London would kill the little thing, and he had better, therefore, remain where he is in the sun. And why have all these women come bringing me presents? Simply out of gratitude (and gratitude is one of their chief characteristics) to a woman who loves their country, and because that woman is English.

Right into the very heart of Asia the word "England" stands for something almost superhuman. "We can never, never forget that England has shed her blood for us," said one day the Turkish Heir to the throne. England stands for all that is good and honest and just. England is the fairy godmother, who, with a touch of her magic wand, could put everything straight for them. In the families where there are two governesses, an Englishwoman and a Frenchwoman, it is the Englishwoman who is

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given the position of trust, the Englishwoman who sleeps in the children's room, the Englishwoman who buys their clothes; in short, whatever the mother cannot do herself she prefers the Englishwoman to do for her. "The Englishwoman told me so, therefore I believe her," is a phrase which I myself have heard; and one mother, quite recently, who was, in spite of my presence, weeping bitterly because her son had gone to Paris to study, added, "It would have all been so different had he gone to England." My host tells me, too, that when he was a little boy, and the Circassians were groaning under the Russian yoke, his mother and her friends used to comfort each other with the hope that the English most surely would come to deliver them. They did not think of the Turks, who were their natural deliverers, and who at that time were quite strong enough to come to their assistance; but their thoughts always turned to the great far-away England, who always came to help States in bondage, or States struggling for regeneration.

And so, when I think of this great prestige of my country, it seems a thousand pities that there are persons doing their best to destroy that prestige.

I hear the Turks called suspicious—during the reign of Abdul Hamid, perhaps, yes—they had every reason for being so. I have trusted them, and they of all the nations of Europe have never given me the wrong change.

I have trusted them, and they have not deceived me. One day, I remember, I had to cross the bridge without Fâtima, and pay my own toll. Not knowing the Turkish for what I wanted to say, I opened my purse, and the man took out what he wanted and put back the change. My boxes have never been locked since I left the boat. When I return from my afternoon drive Miss Chocolate takes off my "tcharchaff" and puts away my purse. My books, my papers, my letters are all open; the few jewels I possess are on my table. I close my eyes in the homes of these humble villagers confident that no harm will come to me; that they will not unfasten my pearls whilst I sleep. In our Western countries should I not be scolded for putting temptation in their way? And I, in my turn, feel sure they trust me.

My friend Zeyneb lives at No. 43. It is a luxury to have a number. Addresses are generally given in this manner: the district first, let us say "Kiz Tach," for example; then, as further direction, "the house at the corner, near the fountain, near the convent, near the mosque." One generally trusts to Providence, in the form of a kindly stranger, to find the way, and I must say they take unending pains to help one. With a number, then, I say to myself, it will be easy to find Zeyneb. But alas, there are other No. 43's in the district, these numbers, for the most part, having been purchased at

the bazaar and put on the door without rhyme or reason, and as a sort of decoration. To find my friend's house, which is ten minutes' walk from Pera, it took my coachman two and a half hours and cost me 20f., and "the way is so easy," explained Zeyneb. After that I walked, following these instructions: "Always keep on the cobbles which lie on the earth from north to south. Although the road may turn and twist, mount and descend, as long as you keep on the north to south lying cobbles you will be all right." And after dark, when I have taken that way, had the Turks been suspicious, what would they not have imagined I was doing when suddenly, from my little bag, I extracted a box of matches and examined the cobbles to be sure I had not strayed on to those lying from east to west. Once or twice a kindly old man brought his lantern, and came with me as far as the hillock, at the side of which Zeyneb's No. 43 is situated.

When I remarked on the number of maps and the prominence given to drawing of maps in the Turkish schools, my guide answered, "You English on your comfortable island do not require to know the map of Europe."

Yes, a thousand pities it is that we all of us, from the highest of the land to the schoolboy, should not have a more accurate knowledge of the map of Europe and a more accurate knowledge of the peoples on that map. If all those who are now working in the cause of peace

turned their efforts towards making the nations of a country understand one another better war would be much less possible. If only we had more knowledge of the people of other lands, many diplomatic errors could be avoided. Over and over again we have slighted the Moslems of our Empire. How many of us even realize that King George rules over more Moslems than any other sovereign. Hear the asinine remarks of our young subalterns about the uncivilized Indian *niggers* who must be kept in their place!!" How dare they thus humiliate persons of a civilization older and greater than our own.

There is a wonderful brotherhood amongst the Moslems. Any injustice to their Moslem brothers of Turkey is counted as an insult to Moslem Indians; they have written so to me. Unfortunately we have not this same brotherhood amongst us Christians. I have in my possession a letter written by a Lazarist Father, deploring the possibility that Constantinople might fall into the hands of the Greeks. "They are waging war," he says, "in the name of the Cross, but does Europe not know that that Cross is *tout ce qu'il a de plus Grecque*" (sic). What a splendid example of Christian brotherhood to show to the Moslems of the world! He prefers the *infidel* Turk to another member of the Christian Church because the Turk has offered him hospitality and allowed him to have his churches and his missions, and has in no way interfered with his religious

liberties, whereas from his brother Christian he could not expect such broad-mindedness. And what horrors would not have been committed at the Holy Sepulchre had not the Turks been there to guard it against the Christians. Sad, indeed, it is that this wonderful Christian religion of ours should be divided against itself to the detriment of its best interests.

Had the Bulgarians and the Christian natives of the Balkans gone out to wage war like Hottentots, or any of the other nations they have the impertinence to regard as savages, we might have pitied them; but that they should carry the Cross, and wage war in the name of the Cross, what Christian can ever forgive them? "We used to respect your Christian Cross," one day a Turk said to me; "we used to bow respectfully when the Cross passed in the streets, but the Bulgarians have dragged that Cross in the mire." I was one day reading with a friend the beautiful, wonderful story of Jesus of Nazareth.

"This is not the Christ of the Bulgarians," she said. "No, indeed," I replied.

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And Young Turkey—has she yet had a chance? We cannot pass judgment on them till they have had ten years' fair trial. Unfortunately for them, their revolution was a little too idealistic. Theirs was to be a bloodless revolution! Bloodless revolution it was, and it astonished the whole civilized world. Alas! they have now to learn

you cannot make a revolution without shedding blood, any more than a doctor can amputate a limb without shedding blood. The poison they should have cleared away at the time of their revolution they have to clear away now; the minions of Hamid, who earned a substantial living as spies, are still there to plot and plan for the return of the tyrant.

The Young Turks have had to pay a heavy price for their experience! Counter-revolutions and insurrections to the number of seven, and three European wars, and the last two against five nations! Add to this also, the humiliating interference of Europe. I have seen here households with a Greek cook, an Armenian *bonne à tout faire*, an Albanian cavass, and a Turkish gardener. It is no easy matter to rule such a household. See what tact and patience it requires. The Armenian, for some reason, insults the cook, who replies by throwing the chicken at her head; then the Albanian and the Turk are dragged into the quarrel, and you hear them cursing one another in their different languages. Who does not pity the mistress of a house like this? Who is the person so tactless as to interfere? And is it not the same with the Turkish Government, except that they have the Syrians and Arabs as well? When things seem to be going on fairly smoothly, the Powers, with bungling, interfering hands, come along and "demand reforms." "We cannot make headway with our reforms," writes my compatriot from Trebi-

zonde; "some Power always objects to something." And what will the Power say now, when I tell them that here in the schools of Asia Minor the walls are covered with German maps, the apparatus in the agricultural college in German, and most of the scientific instruments are German? Poor Turkey, will she ever have a soul to call her own?

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Unfortunately, the world always seems to forget that the key to the understanding of a nation is in the hands of the women. One sex cannot achieve true greatness without the assistance of the other. "If I only had a woman who could tell me what to do and say just at the right moment," a Turk said to me one day. How well I understand what he felt. Where would our political men be without their womenkind, not only to tell them what to do and say, but often to do and say it for them? This Turk in question had made a social mistake; he told me all about it. In my country a charming wife's smile can atone for multitudes of social sins much more serious; but here——. Political men cannot be expected to bear on their shoulders both burdens political and burdens social.

I have been, whilst here, to see the Governor's wife. She is a sister of the Khedive, and her husband a brother of the Grand Vizier, and, like his brother, he receives no salary for his services. This beautiful and accomplished lady, who dresses only in Turkish dresses, made of Turkish stuffs,

whose very jewels are all set, not in Paris, but in the old Arabian Fâtima style—see of what assistance she could be to her husband if she took her place at the head of his table, as our Western women do! The Princess, who speaks five Western and three Oriental languages, has read, perhaps, more than most of her countrywomen (she is Egyptian), and she has supplemented her knowledge by travelling, not only in every European country with the exception of Russia, but right across to San Francisco and back through Canada, "and you see," she added, charmingly, "I can give all my attention to travelling because I have no dressmaker worries."

The man who has not beside him some woman who can judge instinctively for him, and whisper "Beware!" from the bottom of my heart I pity. him. How many men can tell at a glance whether another is a gentleman or not? A woman generally can, a man sometimes. I have seen most charming Turks with friends unworthy of them. "Surely," I have said to myself, "you would not have made a friend of such a man had your wife been there to guide you!" And so, in trying to solve the riddle of the Turk the answer is to be found behind that harem door. Both men and women blame the harem, and rightly so, for most of their disasters; the remedy they see in the education of the women.

I have come to Turkey at indeed an interesting

time. Here in Broussa I have not marvelled, as did the Oxford professor of Arabic, in the visitors' book, about the boys' knowledge of that language. I have congratulated them on their first football match. I have admired the children's first attempts at plain needlework (not embroidery, that is born in them), dancing, singing, and drawing. In all these arts they have made progress, and although the art students' trees are a little bald and a little too green, and their cows' eyes a little too near their tails, there is in that work a great promise of better.

The Belgian head-mistress of the School of Arts and Crafts, at the opening of which I was present, and who has allowed me to go so often to see the working of a school which, naturally, interests me, tells me, "double the number of children have arrived over the number for whom the Government provided accommodation," and she added, "We must just put up with the discomfort. They are like hungry children asking for bread, and I dare not turn them away."

And now Turkey is to find teachers of her own to instruct all these children. She cannot always be asking the assistance of the foreigner. She knows to her cost now what that means, and we who wish her well will leave no stone unturned to help her to help herself—to improve the teachers' training college, and assist some of the most brilliant pupils to have the benefit of English and French methods of organisation.

CHAPTER XIV

FORBIDDEN GROUND—THE HOLY TOMB

I HAVE been with Fâtima to the Holy Tomb of Eyoub. Ever since I came here I have looked forward to this experience ; not so much, let me confess at once, to see the beautiful porcelains which cover its sacred and historic walls as to contradict the regulation which reserves entrance to the Holy Tomb exclusively for "believers."

This was not my first visit to Eyoub. Five years ago I had the humiliating experience of being refused admission to the tomb because I was wearing a hat; now I am wearing a veil who can tell whether I am Moslem or Christian? Last time I came to Eyoub in a friend's launch. It had been freshly painted, and was out that day as it were for its maiden trip. We had chosen an afternoon when the sea was calm and the atmosphere clear enough to enjoy the magnificent view one has of the opposite shore, and all the hieroglyphics and brass-work on the launch were dancing in the sunshine like little golden butterflies.

Although we could not visit the mosque that

afternoon five years ago, we did not give to the tombs and the curious cemetery the time they deserved. We climbed up the steep and stony path which leads to a "Well of Souls," where a witch with wonderful powers of divination can not only predict what will happen in the future, but will tell you the valuables stolen during the year and in the water of the well the faces of the thieves can be distinctly seen. But we never found the witch.

And now, since my last visit, Eyoub does not seem in the least bit changed. There is the same merchant who sells you corn with which to feed the pigeons, there are the same devout-looking turban-headed inhabitants, the same thickly veiled women, the same unending streams of beggar children, and I even think I can recognise our boatman of five years ago. He is still a little on my conscience. The launch, I remember, was too big to land at Eyoub, so a caïque was called and we were rowed up to the little landing-place; and I remember so distinctly the boatman was not paid. When we returned, however, he was either praying or had gone home to rest. Calling another man, we engaged him to row us to the launch; he was paid and given the money for his colleague. With Western *naïveté*, I asked whether the first boatman would ever receive his money. "Why, of course," answered my friend, not in the least understanding my question.

We drove to Eyoub this time. A long, delightful drive it was through the picturesque

quarters of Stamboul, which are now becoming so familiar to me and to which I have become so attached. The market-place with its richly coloured fruits; the well-balanced shops of meat, bread, and other wares so charmingly arranged on the mule's back—I watch them almost as one watches by the death-bed of a loved one. Like death, the passing of the primitive Turk is inevitable; but that does not make his going any the less sad, nor does it prevent one's mourning. . . .

It was Friday afternoon. The Faithful were at prayer when we arrived. I wanted to see the mosque; but how could I, even as a veiled woman, take my place amongst the women? Much as I admire the wonderful solemnity of the Eastern prayers—much as I, a Christian, would have loved to worship Allah with my Moslem sisters—I was just a little frightened; my action might be mistaken for irreverence.

We went, however, into the gallery reserved for the Sultan, and through the lattice-work windows we had a good view of the mosque below. But the mosque and its historic contents—for it is in this mosque that the Sultan is girt with the sword of Islam—were dwarfed to me in the magnificence of seeing men and women in one mass bending in rhythmic supplication to the God of us all. The women were screened off from the men, but they were "believers," every one of them, and they worshipped with a reverence I had never yet seen elsewhere.

Of its charity, one branch of our Christian Church prays every Sabbath for Turks and heretics. There are some heretics I know who resent being classed with the Turks. I am proud to be classed with the Turks; but then, I am a heretic who has seen them at prayer. . . .

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Eyoub-Ansari-Khalid-ben-Said, to give him his full title, was a favourite standard-bearer of the Prophet, and during the siege of Constantinople he fell. About eight centuries after his death a body was exhumed which was supposed to be his, and was buried by Mahomet the conqueror, who placed it with pomp and ceremony beside the sword of the Prophet. To his tomb come pilgrims who have special favours to ask the saint, and he has accomplished, I am told, some marvellous cures. It was not a little surprising to me that these superstitions had also crept into Islam—yet who would grudge the ignorant the comfort of their beliefs?

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Slowly and reverently I followed Fâtima and her friend across the wide courtyard, whose plantain tree stretched like a magnificent green canopy between us and the sky; a flight of white pigeons flew out to greet us. "Only do not speak!" warned Fâtima once again as we crossed another courtyard to the entrance of the Holy Tomb On arriving at the mausoleum, we took off our

shoes and left them on the doorstep. The thought did just flash through my mind that it would be rather uncomfortable should a passer-by take a fancy to my new shoes; but I soon felt ashamed of my Western suspicions—and, after all, I have left my shoes so often outside mosques and never have they been taken. . . .

Fâtima and I have visited many tombs now. They seem, these *turbés*, to reconcile one with the idea of death, although it is only the great of the land whose mortal remains are kept in a mausoleum. In a coffin covered by a shawl and surrounded by candles, with his Koran and other precious souvenirs kept by his side ready for use, the dead man rests—it is as if he were asleep, and the guardian, who with his little *ménage* of beads and cushions and a Koran, watches and tends and shields him from all harm. These *turbés* are not altogether what one would expect, however, in democratic Turkey. I should have fancied that the equality preached in life would have been enforced after death, and that the Turks would have buried their dead in much the same way as the Moravians, whose cemetery is the picturesque lesson in Socialism which greets me every morning from my study window in Chelsea. Flat stone slabs level with the earth—hidden at certain seasons of the year by long grass, poppies, and cornflowers—whatever they have been in life, on their long last journey they start in the same vehicle.

TURKISH LADIES IN THE COUNTRY WITH THEIR EUROPEAN GOVERNESSES

The guardians of the tombs were generally men of learning—Hodjas, or at least students, who in the evening of their existence were content to guard the mortal remains of some great man.

There is a sympathetic and interesting old Hodja who guards the tomb of the Sultan Fathij, the Conqueror. His age in Biblical parlance is five score and ten, I am told, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement, since I have not seen his birth certificate. He is in perfect possession of all his faculties, walks, however, with difficulty, and he remains all day seated cross-legged on his cushions with his chaplet of amber beads and open Koran before him.

When we had removed our shoes, we sat down beside the old Hodja, and kissing his bony old hand as a sign of respect for his age and his office, Fâtima spoke to him of many things. "Tell him," I said, "that I am a Giaour." Fâtima did as I requested. "There are no Giaours in our religion," replied this kindly old man; "every creature whom God has created is dear to Him and dear to us all."

"There are no Giaours in our religion." The answer was so unexpected and so splendid that I have repeated it to many who have attacked in my presence the fanaticism of Islam. Yet, was the old Hodja right after all? Should he not rather have said, "There ought to be no Giaours in our religion"? The Koran says in this respect, "We believe in God and what has

been sent down to us through the Holy Prophets —we make no difference between them, and to Him are we resigned." This being the case, why then must I, a Christian, go to the Holy Tomb disguised as a Mahometan?

The tomb of Eyoub was by no means the most beautiful that I have seen in Turkey, nor the most interesting. One had not time during one's short stay to examine at leisure the porcelains. But can they be compared in any way, I ask myself, with the exquisite porcelains of the Rustem Pasha mosque, that tiny, almost unknown mosque to which one drives through the most unappetising of the Stamboul streets, and whose beauty so many tourists take for granted, since the mosque is so difficult to find? Two or three walks round the tomb, two or three peeps at the silverwork, two or three glances at the purple silk curtains, and we are out and have put on our shoes again. Yes, indeed, one could see many things more beautiful, but this tomb is beautiful because of the difficulty in seeing it. To run the risk once more of being torn to pieces by an angry mob, as I did in Bosnia! Truly the forbidden fruit is sweet indeed!

We walked slowly up the hills, threading our way amongst the tombs; the wistaria was shrivelling in the brownness of death, but there was a wealth of those bright pink roses which I had searched for in Zeyneb's garden in order to make the rose jam. The ragged beggar

children follow us asking for alms. We pause and look towards the Golden Horn. How magnificent it all looks from here. There the five hills, each crowned by a mosque—Sud-ludgi, Piri Pasha, Hass-Kerin, Kassim Pasha, and Galata—can be seen as distinct as the five fingers of your hand, and all bathed in those wonderful uncertain and poetical tints which do not belong to our Western world.

One wanders on for a while, and then pauses to drink in just a little more of the beautiful landscape. Neither of us care to speak. We understand each other. A melancholy happiness, a calm, quiet feeling of resignation has taken possession of us, and in this resignation lies the whole enchantment of the East.

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Just before we reached our carriage I saw a dear friend with her accustomed unselfishness escorting some English visitors round as much as they, Christians, could see of the holy city of Eyoub. She recognised my voice, and I was introduced as a Turkish lady to my compatriots.

I felt just a little guilty at their delight in meeting a real Turkish woman, but it was too dangerous to undeceive them in those fanatical surroundings. "And how well you speak English, too!" they said. "English was the first language I spoke," I answered truthfully. I wonder whether Miss A. ever told them who I really was.

CHAPTER XV

ON THE SHORES OF THE UPPER BOSPHORUS

TO-DAY the sun peeping through the latticed windows of the harem has found me sleeping soundly on a comfortable mattress in the corner of my hostess's bedroom.

This is my first experience of Turkish country-house life, and it is so different to anything I have lived before—quaint, strange, charming, and at times confusing.

The house is immense—in most countries it would have been classed amongst the palaces—and it looks much larger than it really is, so scantily is it furnished.

But what a curious feeling of loneliness and desolation one has on first entering this house. What has happened to the poor place? Has it been successfully burgled? Have its inhabitants deserted it, or have they simply sent the best of the furniture to the emporium and the "household gods" to the bank? No pictures on the walls, no cosy corners, not even the elements of comfort. Then all of a sudden one discovers a table, almost

hidden from view, covered with a host of tiny little articles, some of gold studded with precious stones, and the tinier they are the more they are cherished, and not one Turkish woman would change her table of useless nothings for a whole room full of Western comforts.

A large retinue of slaves and servants, many born on the premises, are supposed to keep the house in order, yet if every one of them looked "work" seriously in the face, three times their number would not suffice to do the work as we in the West would have it done.

But then, after all, we are not dealing with the West. The Turkish point of view is this: What a lot of fine tears and good worry are wasted in the West. Why should these Europeans criticise us? Our beds do get rolled up and put away before it is time to take them out again. If there is a slight error of an hour on the wrong side of our mealtimes, we do get them. Should our rooms not be dusted daily, a friendly wind from the Bosphorus blows through and shifts the accumulation from place to place. And, says the Turkish woman, "I came to the country to rest. It may seem like running away from rest in order to rest, but that's my business. My household runs on the basis of good, delicious, creamy Turkish coffee at all hours of the day; everything else is in proportion."

The lord and master of the establishment is away. I do not know whether I am sorry. I

find Turkish men so much less interesting than the women. He, the master, will be back some time within the *radius* of a month, and no one ever supposes that my "week-end" will not have extended long past that date. For an unattached woman to suggest that she deliberately wishes to leave a friend's house without a serious reason for doing so is an insult to a dear friend, and it cannot be done.

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Here in the country we are wearing Turkish dresses—nice, comfortable dressing-gown arrangements of Broussa silk, with wide sashes which begin under our arms. Mine has round the neck and sleeves a fine, magnificent embroidery quite out of proportion in value to the stuff to which it is attached, that being the case with so many Turkish embroideries. I'm not sure that my gown suits me, but that is a detail; it was built to accommodate a person twice my width and half my height. Only the master's slippers will fit me, and the noise I make as I slither along the wide hall in my silk gown is like that of a sail in the river breeze.

We have done away, also, with our Western *coiffures*, and it's a delightful change to be wearing "flapper" plaits again, and so good for the hair. And then, since the master is away, provided I do not again commit the indecency of letting the gardener see my hair and the sun kiss my

unveiled head, it matters little whether my hair is up or down.

The old *nourrice* having fallen out with both her shoes and stockings, has discarded them for the time being. Fortunately for her the rooms are carpeted. Taqui, the Armenian servant, who waits at table and is chief of the bed-distributing servants, has done away with her shoes; to her heelless and toeless stockings, however, she has become so attached that no promise of better seems to tempt her away from the affection she feels for her old friends.

Amongst the staff there are two grooms and a coachman, relics of the "fat" years that are no more; and although there are no horses in the stables, they still remain in the family, performing odd jobs like opening and shutting the huge windows at the back of the house.

In honour of my arrival, a tiny slave, perched like a fly on the top of a garden ladder, is busy cleaning the big window with a dainty silk handkerchief. She has been working for an hour, and although during that time she has toiled and accomplished little, and finally given up in despair, a small bright and shining place, sparkling in the sun, is there as proof of her charming compliment to the housekeeping qualities of my nation.

At the same time, one of my hostesses, seized with a fit of Western energy, is, with the assistance of a small camel's-hair brush and a box of water colours, busy supplying vivid red and green

parrots with those beaks and feathers which a recent rainstorm has swept into air.

I suggest that if a brush can be found for me—or a blunt knife—I would like to help in re-beaking the parrots, or if anything from a pocket handkerchief to a towel can be found, I too might make a shining place on the window-pane (how delightfully Turkish). But no—I am the honoured guest—cigarettes, coffee, and sweets are provided for me. I must remain in the seat of honour, as far from the door as possible and right in the draught of the gilded windows.

What a curious household we are! I have obeyed my hostess's orders and brought no luggage except a tooth brush. With everything I have been provided, including my dresses, and a *sachet* of linen is placed every night at the foot of my mattress.

There is in my room a little *coiffeuse* which looks like a doll's table in the emptiness of the room; a big armchair and a carpet complete the furniture. We wash all together at a marble fountain, and when the weather is dry it takes an eternity to wash, for the drainage is primitive and you can only coax the drops of water out of the tap at the rate of two a minute.

But oh! the silence and loneliness of my bedroom. It frightens me. I wish one of my friends had offered to share it with me. I wonder how long the sturdy candle will last! What a distressing shadow the *coiffeuse* makes on the

wall! There are little draughts coming from everywhere. The door, bereft of its handle, is attached by a string to a substantial nail and the window will neither open nor will it quite shut.

I sink down on to my mattress and fall asleep, but only to wake with a start a few moments later. Having reassured myself that the door is securely hooked on to the nail, I go back to my mattress again, but not for long: the moonbeams forcing their way through the latticed windows have given birth to all kinds of curious shadows, the *coiffeuse* is dancing in the candle light, and the deadly solemn silence is unearthly. If only the trees would shiver as I am shivering! If only a dog would bark! If only I could sleep! but paradox of paradoxes, it is the silence that is keeping me awake. "Yet I am not afraid," I say to myself. "I will sing to contradict this awful silence." I try, but not one note will come, for terror has frozen my voice to my throat.

Summoning up the little will-power that the soul-crushing harem life has left me, I stagger to the mirror to see how I look—but the horror of it! Can that hideous, unearthly face be mine? Where am I? and where am I going? My whole being is numbed, my ears are singing—I can remember no more. . . .

Exactly how I and my bed were transplanted to my friend's room I cannot tell. Did I faint? It is not a pleasant memory, nor one on which I care to dwell; let me turn my thoughts rather

from my lonely bedroom to my curious bed—my beautiful, comfortable, unpractical bed.

The costliest of linen, the finest embroidery, a satin bolster allowed to show itself at both ends through the embroidery, satin cushions heavily embroidered with gold—the sheets sewn to the quilt—the gold itself worth a nice little sum—this is my bed, and all this magnificence cast down in the corner of an almost unfurnished room!

. . . . .

The day is breaking; the Bosphorus, so near to our window, is licking the steps of the rickety landing stage. In a short while the little white boat will come paddling along, if it has pleased the captain to start at all, for unless the Bosphorus is calm he prefers not to run the risk of attaching his little boat to the landing stages which dance on the waves with more zest than his boat.

To-day the Bosphorus is calm. The rising sun has thrown himself on its bosom, and their joyful union sheds around an indescribable happiness. Who could imagine that only a week before, this peaceful resigned-looking river had raged and stormed and invaded the peaceful resigned souls who dwell so confidently near its banks? But nothing will cure these unprepared Turks! Over and over again the Bosphorus has overstepped its boundaries, swept away landing stages, entered the houses and caused damage irreparable—it is not natural for a river which looks so fine when it is sparkling

in the sunshine to scowl and frown and storm, and no doubt each time it misbehaves they hope it will be the last. It is the character of the Turk, and so it will be always. Armenians—Greeks—Bulgarians—Germans will overstep his boundaries until they have swept him out of his harem and out of his land.

. . . . .

My hostess is stirring. How peacefully she sleeps, and how well her dark skin looks beside her scarlet cushions. She rushes to the window. She, too, will admire the Bosphorus.

"Beautiful, beautiful river," she says, half musing. "What would lonely Turkish women do without you to love!"

"Do you never tire of the Bosphorus?" I asked.

"Never," she answered; "everywhere I go I see it; it is my fixed standard for all comparisons of beauty in nature. When we are unhappy, or think we are unhappy, we throw our woes on to the Bosphorus and dream them away . . . what a consolation to follow even in imagination a barque that is slowly sailing away somewhere . . . perhaps to eternity."

But I am ravenous. My long, curious, eventful night has begotten for me the appetite of a wolf. I hope something will be given me to eat and drink without unnecessary delay. "Taqui," I call, for just as I was about to ask for something to eat she pops her head inside

the door without knocking, as is the custom. She kisses and hugs us both. Her hair, like ours, is done up into a hundred little plaitlets, and covered with a handkerchief—this method of wearing one's hair during the night has been advised by all the potentates of the witchcraft sisterhood. Turkish women have thick glossy hair—it is the result that counts.

Taqui has made the tea and is pouring it into a thin egg-shell porcelain cup. But it is not the same as when the *Hanoum* herself makes it. What can have happened? Nothing very serious, dear Taqui, except that you have forgotten to put in the tea. So tiny an error can easily be remedied and the water is quite respectably hot.

In the meanwhile there is enough food for me to go on with. A massive silver tray resting on an unsteady table is covered with all kinds of good things, but what shall I choose?

Fig compôte bathed and saturated in sugary juice. I cannot swallow it. Marrow jam equally saturated in sugar, sweet almond biscuits, brown sausages—(are they shrivelled up from age or is that their natural condition?)—there is also cheese with an equal proportion of sugar and more biscuits that probably have seen better days. . . . I have postponed my hunger.

Taqui has found the tea—a quarter-pound packet which, like the biscuits, looks as though

it had seen better days. She is to make the tea; I, as the honoured guest, cannot offer to help. Pausing only to kiss the back of my neck, which she does whenever an occasion presents itself (and particularly at table when she is serving a dish floating in oil), Taqui shoots half the remaining tea out of the packet on to the lukewarm water . . . and waits to see me drink the unhappy result—it has not even been stirred. . . . Blessed is she who expecteth less than a good cup of tea on the shores of the Bosphorus!

CHAPTER XVI

MORE ABOUT HAREM LIFE ON THE BOSPHORUS

THE house itself is built as most Turkish houses are built, with two separate entrances—the Haremlik and the Selamlik—and a central entrance hall, arranged as a lounge, from which all the other rooms can be entered. The lounge on the ground floor is marble tiled and in the centre is a fountain which has long ceased to play. There are chairs uncomfortably near the ground and unsteady-looking coffee tables, and the whole place has not yet recovered from the recent overflowing of the Bosphorus, a substantial piece of the front door being amongst other things missing.

The front door possesses neither knocker nor bell. To obtain admission one kicks or bangs, but not too violently, for the whole thing would yield before very little pressure.

And the arrival at the house itself! How strange! The springless old wagon which comes to the boat to meet one, and the faded green curtains which are discreetly pulled along a rusty

rod to hide us from the glances of the passers-by! The weary old horse, not too securely roped to the springless wagon, which rumbles and jaunts over the "self-made" paths! The inhabitants peeping through the latticed windows as we rumble by! How and where we were going to I just began to wonder, when the turban-headed coachman drew up at the dilapidated, God-forsaken-looking dwelling where I now am staying. But, really is "God-forsaken" the word to use? "God-forsaken," when the Turks have a comfortable habit of leaving all the hard housework to God Himself! He sends His rain to wash the steps and clean the windows. His wind blows away the dust. His sun kills the microbes and dries the dampness. He makes the fruit and flowers to come in their right season, and the Turk looks on. . . .

Three or four kicks and several sharp umbrella-taps at the door, and we obtain admission. The male who opens for us first looks at me curiously and then smiles, whilst Taqui, emerging from behind a palm as big as a small tree, takes us all in her arms, and welcomes me with such vehemence that my hair comes tumbling down. That means good luck, says she. That is compensation!

A good, kind, sympathetic soul is Taqui. She was given as wife to the gardener as a reward for his years of faithful service, and had borne him a substantial family, all of whom live on

the premises and walk in and out of the salons as they please, except when there are *visites de cérémonie.* I feel honoured to be classed as a member of the family; and also *visites de cérémonie*, which are rare in Turkey, come quickly and leave quickly, whilst I have come to take up my residence for as long as it pleases me to stay. Taqui must have been born somewhere within the influence of the "Joconde," for she had the face and the wicked smile of the much-discussed Italian, or perhaps had the real "Joconde" Armenian ancestors?

She is a hard worker, judging from Oriental standards, and used to complain bitterly about the lazy Turks, and as she takes her place at the head of the procession of slaves carrying beds she urges her companions to hurry, or the beds will never be made. Sometimes, however, even she forgets herself and pauses as she carries the mattresses to listen to some favourite song. At the end of the first verse she drops her mattress, sits on it during the second, and then, having given way so far, she waits until the singing is over. But it is not often that Taqui goes astray, and considering how many times she kept the others from committing this Turkish failing—killing time—a little margin should be allowed her from time to time.

There is a beautiful old woman in the household whom I long to "Kodak." Once I thought I "had" her as she sat cross-legged on the

carpet rolling her quarter-hourly cigarette, but she noticed me, alas! then cursed, screamed, and buried her head in her roomy pantaloons. I shall not repeat the experiment.

This old lady is a personage in her way. Years before, she attempted to visit the Holy Tomb at Mecca, and although she never really got there, having lost all her worldly possessions in consequence, those kind friends who gave her shelter when she returned penniless always addressed her by the title "Hadgi," a title given to those pilgrims who go for their salvation to the Holy Tomb.

Hadgi loved the young master of the house more than the whole world. She was at his birth and at his mother's birth. Her great wish was to see the master's own little son make his appearance on life's scene. But the young master had acquired Western tastes, and in spite of the teachings of the Koran, in spite of all the privileges the Koran offers to those who enter into "holy matrimony," the young master was twenty-five, and had not yet taken unto himself a wife, nor was he thinking of doing so.

It was this question of the master's future that was tormenting poor old Hadgi when my visit began. She did not care for my appearance in a hat, but when I sat beside her on the floor and threaded her needle and tucked away inside my veil all my hair, the old woman's heart melted, and she

promptly offered me not only the master of the house but all her worldly goods—four hand-woven coarse chemises, exquisitely embroidered, which, tied up in a handkerchief, remained beside her on the floor all day; at night, still tied up in a handkerchief, an honour paid by women to the Koran, beside her bed. To me, these chemises were more like armour than *lingerie* and of not the slightest use; they were, however, placed beside my bed for two nights, then given back to their owner, and she rejoiced more over the return of her lost chemises than over any present I could have made her. Dear old Hadgi, she could be such a sweet angel. She tied me up with charms to protect me from the evil eye, she sang to me and admired me and loved me, but only as long as I was veiled. When I wore a hat I was a stranger to her—not one of the "faithful"; and when I went to sit beside her, her usually benevolent face clouded, her eyes flamed, and she rose from the floor and hobbled away, casting at me a look which being interpreted might have been, "What are you doing beside me, Giaour? Whose religion is the better—yours or mine? I shall see you do no mischief here. . . ."

. . . . .

The kitchen is a hundred yards from the house and the same distance from the dining-room. It is quite an independent building and a really excellent idea for those who object to kitchen "odours." There is to balance this convenience,

however, the fact that should it rain or snow the soup increases in quantity and the vegetables have water added to the oil, and oil and water do not mix, also Taqui is tempted on the way to question one of her children as to where he is going and what he is doing or likely to be doing; but still, to those who really do not know what is supposed to be hot and what cold, it does not matter.

The kitchen building is thick with ivy and creepers; even its unpoetic chimney is encircled with a wealth of roses which spread all around a welcome and delightful perfume. Above all, however, I love the garden. In the days that had been, it was planted and cared for and attached in terraces, as it were, to the side of a hill. Now it is left to the freedom of its own sweet will, and the roses, jasmin, carnations, lilies, and violets which grow all the year round are vying with one another for supremacy. Everywhere the roses have an easy victory, for it is they who can climb best, and they have climbed over every convenient inch of territory they can find. Exquisite, glorious roses they are! It seems a sin to pluck them in order to make jam, especially in a land where the women have a pathetic tenderness for flowers.

"You mustn't pluck a flower when the sun has gone to rest," they tell one, "for then the souls are coming into the flowers and you would kill a little soul about to be born." So I respect the little souls that are being born, and wander along the weed-grown paths, roses tearing my silk

dress, roses tearing my veil. Who could be unhappy in a garden when the sun has drawn out all around a most perfect concert in perfumery—roses, lilies, jasmin, carnations, and violets? When I am back in my country I will see what the distiller can make of this concert; it will be to me a souvenir of this beautiful garden of the East where I have dreamt and where I was glad, and at the same time sad; where I have longed and hoped and am resigned. How far are the perfumes of "Araby" responsible for the destinies of its curious people?

"In my country," said I to my friends, "the book of 'saws' has it that those who love flowers are born to sorrow." "No doubt, no doubt," they answer, "but we will bear with the sorrow, for no Oriental can do without the flowers."

CHAPTER XVII

INCONSISTENCIES ON THE SHORES OF THE BOSPHORUS

I HAVE been to stay with Zeyneb at her little Yali on the shores of the Bosphorus. I had not seen her since she so resolutely and for ever closed the book of her European experiences, and our first meeting was just a little painful. Zeyneb is a dear friend—a curious, interesting study—a woman who had gone forth with a flourish of trumpets to try the great, wonderful liberty of the West,—a woman who cast aside her own civilization to throw herself before the altar of ours. She was not prepared for our civilization, she was not armed for the fray, the hurricane of progress took her off her feet, and now . . . she is back in the little Yali again.

This time I came in a caïque, for the house is right on the water's edge. It looked from the river like a tiny house—almost a Henley villa—yet once inside, it grew and grew, and every room seemed to give birth to a new one. I felt as though I were visiting a genealogical tree. . . .

I cannot master Turkish architecture—at least, this funny place has entirely upset my calculations. Perhaps in the days when polygamy was practised the master of the house, beginning with one wife, built the façade, then extended his premises as he extended his family; the fact that his eighth wife is still living permits me to make this bold supposition. A hateful idea it is, to have rooms with more than one door; it's like having people with eyes in the back of their heads, and I wonder whether there is not also a door under my bed and one in the ceiling. It's rather uncanny too, for in a country where doors have no locks and would not lock if they had, every one flits unheard into one another's room. . . .

Fortunately there is some one in all the three rooms leading out of mine. I have a big brass bed with mother-of-pearl decorations, the mattress is comfortable, so surely, being very tired, I will sleep. I close my eyes, and shortly afterwards wake with a start. In the semi-darkness I see a figure in my room; I call out in some language. "Don't be afraid," replies the figure, "it is Zeyneb." She has been to fetch a fire lest I should be cold. In her one hand is the brass *mongal*, about the size of a pail, which throws out a welcome heat, and in the other a big silver teapot to warm the water for my bottle after I am sound asleep. "Don't be afraid," again says my hostess, but it is just a little strange to see in the

dim moonlight a long, sweeping dressing-gown, a turban-headed figure armed with a *mongal* and a teapot.

As time goes on, however, I grow accustomed to these nocturnal invasions and too lazy even to acknowledge them. Sometimes it is my left neighbour who comes in to help herself to my candies or my syrup, sometimes my back neighbour wonders, since she cannot sleep, whether I am also awake, and if so perhaps a story . . ., and sometimes Zeyneb wakes me to see whether I am dead, so peacefully do I sleep.

I am invited to coffee in the Selamlik. Zeyneb must not accompany me, she who was a Western club woman—she who ate *décolletée* in the presence of men. . . .

A charming diplomatist who is there—he is a Turk of the old school—rises politely when I enter and asks permission to talk for a few moments to his brother diplomatist, a European, in French. Their conversation is charming and interesting—both speak French with a curious, original construction. What kind of French construction shall I have acquired, I wonder, by the time I return to Paris?

But the Turk has me on his conscience—he cuts his conversation down to the lowest possible brevity, and then *en galant homme* comes right down to my level!

I asked him for political news. "Mademoiselle is very polite," said he; but he would not allow

me to sacrifice myself in that manner. I remained firm, so did he. "Poetry for women," said he, "politics for men." "In my country women like politics better than poetry," said I. "Yes," he answered, "but not you. I have seen pictures of your political women!"

We were to go for a picnic—a mysterious little semi-Western performance, and no one was to know about it. Our plan of action was soon determined.

It is noon and we have already lunched. A springless wagon is before the door. Thickly veiled, we get in and the curtains are drawn. A short while after another wagon starts. This wagon will follow us, but it does not convey veiled women. Let me at once confess, it contains as many men as we are women. What a bold adventure!

The men are Turkish gentlemen, and will keep within the confidence of our little circle what we are rash enough to do. There is amongst our party *une jeune fille à marier*, and we would not care to wreck her matrimonial prospects for any pleasure, great or small, that might be ours. . . .

A charming drive it is—a little long perhaps, but the jolting of the carriage is exercise in Turkey. One has every horseback sensation from walking to jibbing, except a good canter.

Along the zig-zag path we plunge. We catch hold of one another as we dive into the holes;

we crawl up the hills and crawl down, and finally arrive at the forest and at the lake where we are to meet.

It is a sleepy, beautiful lake covered with pink and white water-lilies, and a little old boat has been taken prisoner amongst them.

Not long after our arrival we are joined by the Selamlik. I don't know any of the men, and we are introduced and bow in the picturesque fashion, carefully keeping our hair covered, and we speak to them as naturally as though we were in the West.

Together we admire the beautiful nature around. We speak of the war—we speak of the future—we make plans for Turkey, and the men present us each with boxes of cigarettes and chocolates, and eat them with us until the sinking sun reminds us that it is time for us to be returning the way we came. Then the two sexes—the Harem and the Selamlik—are separated again, but both feel better for the little interlude.

We have done no harm, nor is our adventure particularly thrilling, though charming all the same. Perhaps after all the Turks are right—they can give to innocence, as we cannot, a lovely dash of wickedness.

. . . . .

One more household to stay with and my visits on the shores of the Bosphorus must be ended. Fâtima wants me back, and that is sufficient

excuse for my leaving my friends without offending them. Also, it is getting very chilly near the Bosphorus, and already the general exodus back to Constantinople has begun.

I watch the removal carts packed with luggage passing before the windows. Sometimes it is a donkey or a series of donkeys who remove the goods on their backs, but whether it be cart or donkey the things have a peculiar habit of falling off or out, and but for an honest passer-by who draws the driver's attention to the fallen articles, they would be lost. And all this takes time, and yet the Turk says, "Why hurry? One's destination will not walk away." . . .

I am now to stay with the family of a Cherif —a high dignitary of the Moslem church. In this family the division between Harem and Selamlik is strictly kept—and such a family will be the last to cast aside any of the traditions or superstitions that have crept in like a weed to spoil and strangle Islam.

. . . . .

My visit is over. It has been interesting as an experience, but not one man have we seen for one week, for as the Cherif may see no woman farther removed in blood than a sister —and there are generally other women visitors there—he cannot come to the harem.

In this household, only one lady spoke French, and that not at all well; added to this, she is timid and prefers rather not to speak than to

give me an opportunity of criticising her. Our conversation therefore is reduced to signs, and our pleasures to eating and drinking. We have the east side of the house, the men the west; and we each have a separate garden, and a wall that no one would dare to climb separates us.

Our long unending meals are still longer since I require both my hands to talk with. An old negress insists on filling up my plate with good things. "I simply can't," I say to her in English; she laughs the bereks off the dish. Then she explains to me with signs which the French speaker finally puts into French: "*Beaucoup corps, beaucoup manger.*"

In the afternoons, since we cannot speak, we try on all kinds of costumes and drink coffee, the ladies always taking possession of my grounds to see whether something good is not in store for me. A sign of "abundance" is always there, but since the interpreter has never been able to define the kind of abundance to which I am limited, let us hope an abundance of all kinds of good things is coming.

It is a curious household and quite without interest to me after one day. A weary round of days exactly the same—women who know little of their own land and nothing of any other. I begin to feel myself a "sin" in such surroundings. Perhaps after my visit these women will begin to think. They were

perfectly happy before I came; will they still be happy after I have left? Yes, I believe so. Some power has arranged their life as it is. Were that power to wish it otherwise, that power would change it. Every nation must have doormats at its threshold.

CHAPTER XVIII

ONLOOKERS ONLY

AND now the time has come for me to return to my native land, I ask myself what have been my final impressions of my life as a Turkish woman. All these weeks, which have slipped by without my noticing their going, I have felt like an actress seated in the theatre, watching another play my part—indeed a restful sensation.

I came here with perhaps just a little of the "downtrodden woman of the East" fallacy left, but that has now completely vanished. To me, an Englishwoman, there are sides of this life which would irritate me into open rebellion. That the customs of the country should have power to make me wear a veil, whether I wished it or not, that I should be forced to travel in a compartment reserved exclusively for women, that I must always have the hood up when I drive in a carriage, that if I chance to stray into a café of the people, I am served in a superior kind of rabbit-hutch, separated by a grating from the opposite sex, that if I go into a tea-shop where there are men, I will be

requested to leave, and last, but not least, that I should have to depend for male society exclusively on my blood relations—Heaven indeed forbid!

A Turkish woman asked me once what it felt like to be able to mix freely with men who are not blood relations. "I cannot *tell*," I answered; "it dates right back to the time when my big brother teased me to tears, and his friend wiped them away. To ask me what it means to mix freely with men is almost like asking what it means to have lungs. I never stopped to think, but I know I should die without them."

But then, after all, is not everything relative? Had I never known the pleasures of male society, had not circumstances forced me to take my life in my own hands and work out my own destiny, I should not perhaps quarrel with what is part of a Turkish woman's existence. If we in the West possess what is known as the "joy of liberty," have not so many of us been denied the blessing of protection? The veiled Turkish woman asks, Can you imagine how distressing it is to be willing to work and for the conventions of the country not to allow it? Many of the poor tired workers of my country might ask, Can you imagine what it is to have to work and not to be able to find work?

All these weeks I have been leading a Turkish existence. I have really tried to put myself in a Turkish woman's place, but I cannot somehow

pity her. Is it that I have been too near the suffering heart of my own countrywomen? "Our lives are so empty," pointed out one woman. "Really we do not have enough social distractions." I close my eyes and think of the women of my own country, worn out with a London season and its festivities. In their moments of sincerity they would not tell you they had expended their time and energy only to be bored; but social obligations cannot be taken in moderate doses, you must swallow the whole draught.

"Can you imagine what it is to have longed all your life to hear Wagner and a full orchestra and not to be able?" said one woman; and another, who is an exceedingly good musician, tells me she has no idea of her own value as a pianist, seeing she never had an opportunity of hearing professionals.

But all this is changing, and it is a passionately interesting study to see them taking off the customs of ages to put on something different. How will they appear when next I visit them?

I have called the Turkish woman an "onlooker." She is at present, as it were, only on the margin of the great life; she understands enough of the game, however, to long to take a part. How will she play that part? Is it absolutely necessary for her to come to us for assistance?

This is the question I have asked so many

Turkish women. They must think I argue almost like a reactionary. Yet I have not defended the harem system. There is, however, so much in the Turkish home life which is beautiful that I would prefer to see them progressing on the lines of their own civilization, rather than becoming a poor imitation of us. Let them come to us and learn to organize their studies; the rest they can, if they will, manage for themselves.

But I have a feeling that, except for a very few, Turkish women will not take too kindly to our civilization. When my charming English friends, who reconcile me just a little to Pera, took me to the Dorcas Ball I felt uncomfortable prickings of conscience, going to enjoy myself and leaving my friends at home. I might have saved my regrets, however, for it was they who were sorry for me, having to waste my time dancing till the small hours of the morning with mere acquaintances.

And those Turkish women who have come to Europe? How well they have adapted themselves to our civilization. When they were with us who could have supposed they were wearing hats for the first time? Who could suppose, to hear them speaking our language, to see them threading their way in and out of the traffic of our big capitals, that they had not lived with us all their lives? And yet how glad they were to return to their own home life!

The Turk has always been most severely attacked in Europe on the manner in which he treats his womenkind. He considers them, it is said, "mere possessions." But surely this is the case with the men of most nations. On what but this is the woman's rebellion based?

That the Moslem woman has no status, I most emphatically deny. If the Moslem women are "possessions," they are "cherished possessions" and treated as such. Are Moslem women obliged to exercise the most hideous of professions as are their Christian neighbours? Is there anywhere in the East the terrible degradation of our poor Whitechapel women? It is not because he despises her that the Turk has kept his womankind screened from the world. Her rôle is maternity, therefore the cares and temptations of the world must not be known to her, and nothing ought to interfere with this supreme reason of her existence.

Quite recently a decision of the greatest importance and daring was taken by the Ottoman Government. Without their having to ask, the University was thrown open to women, and they are now attending lectures on gynæcology, hygiene, woman's rights, etc.

When I heard the news, much as I rejoiced, I could not help making a comparison between the methods of the East and those of the West. Here are these "unspeakable" Turks giving to women privileges for which they have not asked,

simply because they are theirs by right, and since they are to take their place as workers in the world, they must be educated. And yet, here in England, much as women have tried to work along the lines of evolution they have been driven to revolution. Is this sex antagonism of their asking? From the beginning of the woman's movement, every privilege has had to be bought with rebellion.

. . . . .

And now, with reluctance, I close the diary of my existence as a Turkish woman. I have not attempted to give a careful and finished picture of my life here; this is the age of impressions, and the beautiful Eastern colouring would lose much of its warmth, were it not put on fresh from the brush. My boxes are corded and ready, the Messageries Maritimes steamer which brought me here will take me back through the beautiful Sea of Marmora, where the setting sun casts itself in such magnificence on to the water beneath it, and the dolphins bathed in sunlight pop up to greet us as we pass along.

A little Turkish friend is going to Europe with me. Her first hat is in readiness, and when the steamer has gone through the "Dardanelles" she will put it on.

If only I could order the same calm sea which brought me here to take me back again; but I must trust to Providence. All through my visit the glorious sun of Eastern hospitality has been

darting its beams upon me—it has been a wonderful experience.

Ah! the beautiful unceremoniousness of the East, the absolute sincerity, the liking of one's friends for friendship's sake irrespective of position, and the true brotherhood and democracy of the kindly Turk . . . if these qualities must vanish in the inevitable march of progress, then may I never see Turkey again; for, without these qualities, it would no longer be the Turkey I have admired and loved.

AFTER-WORDS

IT was Christmas 1913. The Balkan War was over, and Young Turkey had begun with a patriotism born of humiliation to save what remained of the poor mutilated Fatherland. (I have described my impressions of Turkish life during this period.)

At the head of affairs were men who could accept responsibility. Seeds of progress were being sown amongst the ruins. The leaders, who had learnt their lesson from bitter experience and had accomplished so much against terrible odds, could they not now steer the ship of State into the calm waters of prosperity?

Talaat-Djavid and Djémal knew what they wanted. Though confronted with international and internal problems, difficulties of race and religion and financial chaos, yet they kept their heads, and then they made one fatal mistake—that mistake was ENVER PASHA.

Only a year ago Enver was neither Pasha nor the Sultan's son-in-law nor Minister of War. He was lying seriously ill at the German hospital

at Constantinople, and only his great determination to serve his country pulled him successfully through three terrible operations. He had been fighting in spite of appendicitis, and in spite of all kinds of internal complications and bullet wounds. He was brought almost dead from the battlefield—even German surgery had given him up—and yet he would not die. Enver struck one as a picturesque personage. His energy and determination were such new features in Turkish civilization. A fearless and reckless soldier, tall, handsome, a patriot certainly, unintelligent but sincere, hated and loved in so many harems, his picture was to be found draped in the Turkish flag: he was the best selling of picture postcards.

Accompanied by Enver's great friend and master, Djémal Pasha, I went to visit the Turkish hero in the German hospital. It was then I discovered what Djémal afterwards owned was true, that Enver was totally lacking in initiative and imagination, and that he could only command when he himself was commanded, but no one better than he could obey. "And the revolution of 1908?" I asked. "How splendidly he carried out his orders!" I was told. "He's a magnificent fellow, and such a man is *indispensable* to our cause."

Although weak, Enver discussed many political questions with us, but in everything he agreed with his friend Djémal Pasha, whose sympathies were entirely Franco-British, because, as he ex-

plained, and rightly so, Britain and France were the two countries who had no interest to work for Turkey's destruction. Djémal detested Germany even more than he detested Russia. He loved England, but more than England he loved France and everything French, and French culture and thought, and he once added, "*French money*." Djémal's policy was to allow Turkey to be under the greatest obligations to England and France. If only England and France would come forward and do this and that for us, if France would offer us education, if England, as the ruler of our co-religionists, would come nearer to us, where then would be German influence?

The German Mission had just then arrived in Constantinople. My Turkish women friends were much distressed, considering it a humiliation to see their capital thus invaded by Teutons. Indeed, they requested me, in their name, to ask the Government whether the Mission could not be removed to Adrianople. Djémal could not understand the women's anxiety about Germany. "We have begun with German methods and we must go on," said he; "but the German mission has no political meaning. . . ." Djémal was always sincere. His god was power. He wanted power above everything.

And so Enver, as a useful *instrument* of his colleagues, and particularly Djémal, was appointed Minister of War. As their obedient servant in

his own reckless manner, he was to obey their orders; he was to sweep out from the War Office old worn-out servants; to make other drastic changes his friends found indispensable; but his rôle was distinctly to obey, not to command. He fulfilled his mission; he *did* obey, but he changed masters—he gave himself up body and soul, not to his colleagues, but to the German Kaiser.

When Enver so emphatically denied to me the Germanophilism of which he was accused, no doubt he was sincere. He was like a man in love. He, as a soldier of an army suffering from lack of discipline, could not help admiring the German organisation. Their arrogance also appealed to him, and although, as a democrat and a man of the people, he tried to persuade himself to the contrary, he was flattered by the Emperor William's attention. In Berlin, when military attaché, they, the Germans, made a god of Enver; he left his heart in Germany, too, it is said. He may have tried to escape from this German influence; he simply could not: it was his destiny. He who loved to obey found his master at Potsdam and his master's representatives at Constantinople—the Ambassador, Baron von Wangenheim, and General Liman von Sanders, head of the German Mission. They took possession of him; he was powerless; as powerless as his ex-master, Djémal, to take a firm stand once more for Franco-British influence.

It was Christmas Eve a year ago. The

Turkish heir to the throne invited me *tout à fait sans cérémonie* to his palace to coffee and to talk to him about my country. Although he could perfectly understand French, he could not speak it; consequently Djémal Pasha was good enough to act as interpreter.

The Prince's knowledge of everything connected with my country was a pleasant surprise. He admired and loved England. "Whatever political mistakes we may say England has made, however unjustly we may think she has treated us," said the Prince, "England is still our model. She's a clean, honour-loving nation, a nation of gentlemen." These sentiments were shared by the Grand Vizier.

The Prince was not as enthusiastic about France as Djémal Pasha. France to him meant Paris, and Paris was a danger to Young Turkey. "Let our men go to France afterwards, but let them first be sobered down in England," said he. "French learning may be fine, but England gives a young man character. . . . English women make their sons men. We want Turks to be men." To our statesmen the Prince paid tribute; also to our Court, our literature, and our architecture. "It is all aristocratic and solid," were his words. . . .

The Turkish heir to the throne considered German influence something that did not even come within the range of discussion. "Germany," said he, "is forty years old; she has yet to

be tried." Then he added, "Britain has shed her blood for us—that we can never forget."

Such is the opinion of the future Sultan of Turkey about Britain—now Turkey's enemy—and indeed, he meant every word he said.

And in the harems—does Germany even count? Right in the heart of Asia Minor, they have heard of British honour, but who has heard of Germany? and the name of Britain rests on a prestige which has stood the test of time. That "*all right*" verdict which was given to the English governess—that acceptance of the British word without contract—are facts which count.

An ill-advised Government can lead its country to destruction, but the mighty Kaiser himself cannot crush out this admiration born in the Turks for England.

It is true England and France have never considered Turkey worth while, as Germany has done. I said so to a British official. "We cannot send out retrievers, as Baron Marschall does," he answered. "We can only offer a straightforward friendship. If the Turks cannot accept that . . ."

Yet Germany did send her finest diplomatists to Constantinople, and also her picked officers; the Kaiser himself paid court to the Sultan, and on his Eastern tour saw that Moslem feelings and customs were in every way considered. He gave presents of great value to

both the Sultan and his Grand Vizier. Kiamil Pasha in his Konak has books of priceless value given to him by the Kaiser, and yet evidently it was of little value, for the veteran statesman of Turkey turned always to England for sympathy. England was the country who could put everything right, and one of his greatest sorrows was that England had not come to Turkey's assistance in her hour of need.

And Turkey's quarrel in this case was certainly not with Britain. She was still smarting under what she felt the injustice of giving Mitylene and Chios to Greece. Day and night she was waiting for an opportunity to get back her islands, and day and night she was in terror lest Greece should strike before her Dreadnoughts—ordered in England—were ready. Hakky Pasha, the ex-Grand Vizier of Turkey in London, telegraphed and advised that in spite of Germany's offer of assistance against Greece, Turkey must remain neutral, and to attack Greece even during the present war classed her at once as anti-British. But it was not what any reasonable statesman wanted, it was what Germany wanted. Turkey was clamouring for war with Greece; instead of this she found that Germany in her name had bombarded an open Russian port! Germany promised her Mitylene and Chios and even Cyprus. She staked her whole fortune on

German victory and German honour—and Germany promised to free her from European interference. Now, it is not difficult to calculate what Turkey has gained from the speculation.

It is hard to make out a good case for Turkey, but however bitter one may feel against the foolish Enver and the Young Turkish Government, the Turkish people are not to blame. A friend writing from Turkey tells me Germany left no stone unturned to lead the Government into difficulties. In Anatolia, she spread the false report that the Moslems in the Caucasus were being ill treated by the Russians! Baron von Wangenheim took possession of the press. Enver Pasha, led by Baron von Wangenheim, made short work of those who under the eyes of their new masters declared they had put up too long with this "mad Government." Djémal Pasha's orders that the *Goeben* and *Breslau* should be disarmed were totally disregarded; the German Admiral Suchon was master of the situation, and refused to take on board the Turkish sailors sent by Djémal. Turkey ceased to exist.

The rest of the story is known: the touching "Good-bye" which passed between the British and French Ambassadors and the Grand Vizier, the arrival of three million marks which was Germany's first instalment of a river of gold she had promised to her faithful Enver. Then

a time of waiting and the second instalment of gold—German paper!!! Turkey is now quite aware of the treachery of Germany. But it is too late.

"There is no happiness and no salvation for the Turk," a dear friend writes me. "However much we try, whatever sacrifices we make, our lot has always been, and always will be, to be sacrificed to the ambitions of the European Powers. Once more Turkey has fulfilled her destiny. . . ."

. . . . . .

It was Christmas only a year ago. The land of Islam was wrapped in a mantle of snow. To the quiet harem came Turkish friends from far and near, and together we celebrated the birth of the Saviour of the World. It was a beautifully pathetic Christmas, one of the most interesting and wonderful I ever spent.

The celebration of Christmas in a Moslem home! As a little girl, I longed and dreamed of the day when I should be privileged to tell the Moslems the great and real meaning of Christmas. . . . And that day had come.

We had a Christmas tree, we played at snapdragon and hunt the slipper and musical chairs. We sang "Auld lang syne," and to me it was the beginning of a great understanding—a great wide brotherhood—and we promised to spend this Christmas together in the same real Christmas manner. . . .

And that was Christmas a year ago. Could I ever have dreamed where I would be this year? I, who had a year ago explained the beautiful real meaning of Christmas, am here in a French hospital with English nurses helping to repair the ills that Christian nations have done to one another!

What a glorious example for the Moslem peoples! The hideousness of the Christian's warfare! Is there anything the East can now learn from the West?

There are Christmas trees in all the hospital wards. The English nurses have dressed them . . . the bare walls are transformed into a fairyland of ivy and candles and real good Christmas decorations. There are cakes and sweets and fruits and British plum pudding. . . .

Luncheon has ended. These splendid English nurses, who have responded to the French appeal to come and help, ask me for a toast.

"There is only one toast for all thinking humanity," I reply, and the nurses understand.

The German prisoners are washing up the dishes on which we have eaten our British plum pudding. Poor pathetic souls! Let us distinguish between the criminal and his crime. . . .

And this is the Christmas I promised to spend in Turkey—the land where I have spent so many happy days of my life. And this is the result of the world-famed Teuton *Kultur*

Beside the crimes of Louvain and Rheims and the poor shivering and hungry refugees who were first wrecked at Havre and then brought on penniless and homeless here to Bordeaux, and all the other crimes for which Germany must answer, I place the betrayal of Turkey. To deliberately lead to destruction a people who made so brave a stand for regeneration, whose patriotism I have so inadequately described, if this is all that civilization can produce—if this is how we illustrate the lessons we have learnt from Bethlehem to Gethsemane—how can we any longer preach that wonderful gospel of peace and goodwill amongst men?

My companions urge this is the darkness before dawn. Behind the clouds and battle smoke the sun is shining. Cruel platitudes in a hospital of eleven hundred wounded soldiers. And when the war is over? Alas, the unending sadness of my surroundings has killed for a while any hope of happiness.

Hospital Militaire de Talence,
Bordeaux, *Christmas* 1914.

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